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JOYCE E. BURR: Memories of Years Preceding and During  
the Formation of the California Native Plant Society

1947-1966

An Interview Conducted By  
Mary Mead  
1992

[In fulfillment of requirements for the  
Advanced Class in Oral History Methods and Techniques  
Vista College, Berkeley  
Instructor: Elaine Dorfman]

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JOYCE EIERMAN BURR  
1992

Photograph taken by Mary Nead

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GEOGRAPHICAL LIFE ANALYSIS SHEET

Interviewed by: Mary Macdonald  
Date: 10 June 1992

Name of Interviewee: Joyce Eierman Burr

Date/Place of Birth: 30 August 1912 / Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Home Address: 7817 Terrace Drive, El Cerrito, California

Date/Place of Marriage: 4 Aug 1933 / Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Name of spouse: Horace Kelsey Burr

Date/Place of Birth: 9 September 1913 / Manchester, Connecticut

Year of Death: 23 October 1983

Name of Father: Rudolph Henry Eierman

Date/Place of Birth: 1888 / St. Paul, Minnesota

Name of Mother: Marie Eugenia Shultis

Date/Place of Birth: 1888 / Waukesha, Wisconsin

Father's Father/Mother: Frederick Eierman / Emma Miller

Date/Place of Birth: Pennsylvania / Okashie, Wisconsin

Mother's Father/Mother: Eugene Shultis / Cora Sayles

Date/Place of Birth: 1866, Saylesville, Wisc / 1863, Saylesville, Wisc

Brothers: Jack Frederick Eierman, d. 1990

Sisters: —

Children: Stefan Andrus Burr

Lawrence Sayles Burr

Education:

Early: Milwaukee & Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

Lowell High School, 1<sup>st</sup> year in high school, San Francisco, Ca

College: B.S., University of Wisconsin, Education, 1936

M.A., University of Wisconsin, History, 1937

Occupations:

Volunteers time for numerous & various special interest groups



## HISTORICAL TIMELINE

### Historical Events and Trends

<u>Dates</u>	<u>World</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Personal</u>
1912-19				Seattle, Washington
1914-18	World War I			
1919				Milwaukee, Wisconsin
1929-39	Depression years			Family in bankruptcy College education Marriage
1940-45	World War II	Tilden Botanical Garden Founded		Teaching/Research Starts a family
1946 to present				Moves to California Becomes involved in wide range of national, state and local affairs
1947				Discovers Tilden Garden and meets James Roof
1962		Mott becomes Park District Manager		
1963		Controversy over Tilden Garden		Attends Park District Board Meetings
1964				Forms Contra Costa Garden Committee
1965		CNPS Founded		
1969-70	Vietnam War			
1973		CNPS State Office Moved to Sacramento CNPS East Bay Chapter is Formed		



## OUTLINE FOR INTERVIEWS

- A. Personal background
  - 1. Where born and reared
  - 2. Early family life
  - 3. Education
  - 4. Marriage and family
  - 5. Move to California
- B. Board meetings of EB Regional Park District in 1963
  - 1. Burr's personal interest in being there
    - a. Extensive research done voluntarily
  - 2. Mott to move the Tilden Botanic Garden to a new site
  - 3. Friends of the Garden is formed
  - 4. Key people involved--character sketches
    - a. Marion Copley presents signatures to Board in support of existing site; Sproul resistant
    - b. Burr's activities at this time
- C. History of Tilden Botanic Garden
  - 1. Created by James Roof in 1940
  - 2. Relationship between Mott and Roof
    - a. Character sketches of Roof and Mott
  - 3. Mott's actions around a new botanic garden site
    - a. Prime factors behind desire for a new site
    - b. Memories of Mott in years subsequent
  - 4. Description of Grass Valley site and its suitability for botanic garden
- D. Events/activities in 1964-65 around the Tilden Botanic Garden
  - 1. Park District asked Contra Costa County to become a part of the Alameda Park District because of financial problems
  - 2. Many meetings held and research done to save garden site
    - a. Key people
    - b. Burr's activities
  - 3. James Roof is "fired" by Perry Laird
    - a. Circumstances around this event--Laird's position
    - b. Attorney procured in Roof's defense; Roof rehired
  - 4. May 1965 meeting of Parks Board and groups in defense of existing garden site
    - a. Preparation for meeting
    - b. Key people involved
      - 1. Leo Brewer heads "Save the Garden" Committee
      - 2. Helen-Mar Beard hosts meetings at her home
  - 5. At May 1965 meeting, it was clear garden would not be moved



E. Formation of CNPS

1. Subsequent meetings of defense groups continue to meet at Helen-Mar Beard's home
2. CNPS is officially named and organized, August 1965
  - a. Elsa Knoll, Sunset Magazine, consulted.
  - b. Attorney John Dunn is asked to legally establish a new corporation and provide by-laws
3. Efforts towards gathering membership and funds
  - a. Key people involved--character sketches
  - b. Mailing list generated from Roof's "Guide to the Regional Parks Botanic Garden"
  - c. Burr's activities at this time
4. By-laws committee and a board were formed
  - a. Election of first president: Watson "Mac" Laetsch
  - b. Key people involved
5. Paul Hutchison, senior botanist, was consulted
  - a. Suggestions made toward how to put together an organization--very important discussion
  - b. A good publication would be critical
    1. Circumstances around Roof's Four Seasons
    2. Development of CNPS Newsletter
    3. Development of Fremontia
6. An office for CNPS was opened on University Avenue in Berkeley
  - a. Failure to keep office due to financial difficulties
  - b. Circumstances around final payment to Mary Wohlers who was employed by CNPS
  - c. Plant sale was begun in an effort to provide funds for CNPS
7. New chapters born around state
  - a. First ones: Sacramento, Gualala
8. Laetsch resigns as president at beginning of 1966
  - a. G. Ledyard Stebbins becomes new president

F. Burr's personal involvement in CNPS and outside activities

1. Personal activities in CNPS
  - a. Newsletter and Chapter Handbooks
  - b. Offices held
  - c. 'Doc' Burr Scholarship Fund
2. Activities outside CNPS over the years





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We, Joyce Eierman Burr and Mary Zon Mead,  
Narrator Interviewer  
do hereby give to The Bancroft Library for such scholarly and educational uses  
as the Director of The Bancroft Library shall determine the following tape-recorded  
interview(s) recorded on 9, 17, 27 July 1992; <sup>23 September</sup> ~~1992~~ as an unrestricted gift  
date(s)  
and transfer to the University of California legal title and all literary property  
rights including copyright. This gift does not preclude any use which we may  
want to make of the information in the recordings ourselves.

Joyce E. Burr  
Signature of Narrator

2817 TERRACE DRIVE

EL CERRITO A 94530

Joyce E. BURR  
Name & Address of Narrator

Accepted for The Bancroft Library by

7/9/92  
Dated

Willie Burr  
Department Head  
Regional Oral History Office

Oct 21, 1994  
Dated

Mary Zon Mead  
Signature of Interviewer

Mary Zon Mead

PO Box 5404

Berkeley Ca 94705  
Name & Address of Interviewer

9 July 1992  
Dated

Years Preceding & During Formation of California Native Plant  
Society, 1947-1966  
Subject of Interview(s)

Approved as to Form, 24 August 1976



## THOUGHTS ABOUT JOYCE BURR

If the first meeting is not memorable, it is no matter. Perhaps Joyce and Doc Burr came to the house one evening to talk about the Botanic Garden. There was a time when I did not know Joyce, and then a time, without clear transition, when she seemed always to have been a part of my life, as CNPS became a part of it then. CNPS was a sort of skeleton, our small group of people the flesh and blood.

That flesh sometimes bled. At first, every dollar had to count for twenty, had to be bolstered by an enormous amount of work. The few of us, two or three dozen perhaps, did more work than I wish to remember. And found time to enjoy the plants and places we wanted to save.

We few--Ledyard, Jim, Jenny, all of us--endured through long meetings at our house, at the Burr house, and elsewhere, indoors and out. Later meetings were larger, included new chapters, but lasted just as long. We slept in tents, in each others' houses, and in motels. We ate sand and grit over campfires.

On trips we slogged through rainy reaches of Ferndale clay, chilled and dripping, then ate Thanksgiving dinners in the cozy sawdust-barroom of the Ferndale Inn. We baked in Anza Borrego, basked east of the Sierra, wet our feet in the Pacific at Nipomo Dunes.

And always there was Joyce, who could laugh and who could also prod us on. What zest she brought! Those formative days of CNPS were a lively, joyous, fulfilling, beautiful, and loving period, and I shall always remember Joyce as a central and moving part of all that we did.

Susan Frugé  
September 1992



## INTERVIEW HISTORY

The name of Joyce Burr in connection with the California Native Plant Society arose repeatedly in an earlier oral history with Leonora Strohmaier. In addition, Joyce was recommended as a valuable source of information about the formation of CNPS by Jenny Fleming with whom I briefly spoke before I decided to interview Joyce. Since I had already interviewed two people regarding the formation and development of CNPS, I was concerned about the value of further interviews on this subject; however, I called Joyce who was very eager to offer her memories about CNPS. We arranged to meet to discuss an interview outline.

Any doubts about moving ahead with a third interview were dispensed with after talking with Joyce. As I left my parked car, I glanced towards Joyce's home at 7817 Terrace Drive in El Cerrito, and there she was--waiting patiently on the doorsteps with a bright smile and a comment that it was nice I was on time. She shooed her black Scottish terrier, Brandy, out of the living room, and we chose comfortable chairs to discuss the interview process.

I was immediately struck by Joyce's eclectic taste in furniture and decoration: varied and lively, with many small items, all of which seemed to become curiously integrated as we sat talking. She is a very sparkly, animated and outspoken woman whose memories about CNPS are as varied, lively and detailed as the pieces in her living room. I knew I would be challenged by trying to keep up with her! I also knew that her sharp memory and personal perspective would add a great deal to the history of CNPS, and we developed a thorough outline which we would use during the interview process, then arranged for an interview date. I took home a large grocery bag full of early CNPS material to pore over at my convenience.

On 9 July 1992, Joyce and I met for our first interview with two subsequent interviews on 17 and 27 July. She related her memories in a lively way, and her quick mind sometimes got ahead of her. She had wonderful stories which added so much color to her memories of the times preceding the development of CNPS, especially relating to the people involved in the various interest groups. Joyce always sat in a large, comfortable chair, and I became accustomed to seeing piles of records and files that she had stacked all around her. During the tapings, she would frequently reach for material for reference and become quite annoyed with herself whenever she couldn't find something or remember a particular date. What she couldn't remember she would eventually retrieve from her



files, and I was impressed with the sheer volume of records of organizations she has kept over the years. She repeatedly expressed enthusiasm for the oral history project and stated how much she was enjoying the interviews. At the end of the tapings, she shared with me some pictures of her husband (deceased since 1983) and her two sons and their families.

Joyce is an extraordinarily active woman, a champion for local causes for which she organizes groups of interested citizens who collectively initiate change. She has been active in a variety of concerns, ranging from EBMUD expansion activities to school library programs. In addition, she has been involved in numerous conservation issues on local, state and national levels, and she showed me many awards and commendations she has received over the years.

During one visit, Joyce explained to me how her clothes budget, along with her husband's wonderful support, ultimately allowed her to participate in her numerous activities. If she had someone to help her with the housecleaning, she would have more time, but it meant cutting back quite drastically on her clothes budget. She not only found someone to help her with the housework, she became a very adept shopper in second-hand clothes shops!

Joyce was very attentive to the editing process of the transcripts. She realized at one point that she wanted to make some additional comments, and on 23 September we did a very brief taping as an addendum. Some of the wording was changed in the transcribed portion of the interviews to enhance the accuracy of the information without compromising its meaning. After we finished taping, she was kind enough to consent to pose for an informal photograph for the frontispiece for this document.

When inspired by a cause or project which has meaning and value to her, Joyce enthusiastically and wholeheartedly devotes herself to it. These interviews are a product of such devotion, and it was very rewarding to have worked with her.

I am indebted to Jenny Fleming for information and suggestions in several telephone conversations during the course of these interviews.

In editing the transcripts of the interviews, for the sake of continuity, there were some rearrangements of the text along with some deletions of repetitious material.





## PART I. JOYCE BURR: PERSONAL BACKGROUND

[Interview 1: 9 July 1992] ##

### Early Childhood Memories

Mead: Joyce, let's start with your personal background, when you were born, where, something about your family, and then what brought you to California.

Burr: I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and lived the first seven years of my life in Seattle [Washington], then moved back to Wisconsin. I was born in 1912--I'm an old lady! We moved back to Milwaukee and lived there until I was in the sixth grade, then we moved to a suburb called Wauwatosa. Of course we've got all these Indian names all over the place! I went to high school there. When I was in high school I was active in all sorts of things. Sometime I could show a list of all the organizations I was in, and I was editor of the high school paper my senior year.

Mead: Would you describe your family members?

Burr: My mother came from a family who had a lot of difficulties. Her father was an alcoholic. After her mother had had five children, she finally divorced him. Then my mother went out on her own, and she became a secretary, working for the Board of Trade in Milwaukee. She belonged to a girls club which had a summer cottage at Okauchee Lake. She met a young man there who asked her for a date--he came over in his canoe, and so forth. That was my father.

My mother was very much interested in geneology, and one of the first things she told me about her family was that John Sayles, her direct relative, had been married to Mary Williams, Roger Williams' daughter. I was always very proud of being a descendent of Roger Williams, who was a rebel, because I'm a rebel, too. That always made me very happy.



Burr: John Sayles was given land by Roger Williams when he married the daughter, and John Sayles founded Saylesville in Rhode Island. Another member of the Sayles family founded Saylesville, Wisconsin.

My father worked for quite a long time when they were first married at a place called National Brake and Electric. He installed little donkey engines for mines all over the West, for logging and mining. He also went to Hawaii and was in charge of equipping the sugar cane factories with these donkey engines to move the cane. That was when we lived in Seattle for seven years. Then we moved back to Milwaukee.

During the war, he was 4F--he had a major injury, so he wasn't able to be in the war. He tried to start a garage, and that didn't work. Finally, he went into selling automobiles and did this for quite a long time. Later he went into selling stocks.

In any case, somewhere along the line, the Depression got very bad, and we lost everything we had. We lost our summer cottage, we lost our home. Wisconsin fortunately had a special deal where you could stay in your house for two years after it was foreclosed. By the way, our house was foreclosed on a two hundred dollar second mortgage, and there wasn't a place in the world that my dad could get ahold of two hundred dollars. The man who held the second mortgage wanted the house. So we stayed for two years, and then we had to move.

My father went into bankruptcy. He got a new job working for a brokerage house, and it turned out that they wouldn't let you work in a brokerage house in Wisconsin if you had gone into bankruptcy. So he went back into the automobile business and worked in that for a good many years. When he retired from that, a friend of his wanted him to work for a company in Milwaukee, the Shadbolt and Boyd, and he worked there until he couldn't work any more. My mother worked on and off during the Depression.



Mead: Did you have brothers and sisters?

Burr: I had one brother who died two years ago.

Mead: Can you describe the town that you grew up in?

Burr: Wauwatosa--it was a town of about twenty five thousand people, but it was a suburb of Milwaukee. On Sixtieth Street, one side was Wauwatosa, and one side was Milwaukee.

### College Years at the University of Wisconsin

Burr: Then I went to the University of Wisconsin. The first two years I worked during the day in a lawyer's office and went to school at night at the University of Wisconsin extension in Milwaukee. Then I went to the university at Madison on a scholarship--I think it was an NYA scholarship. I got thirty dollars a month or something like that. I worked with the secretary in the history department while I was going to school. I majored in history--I went through the School of Education, but I was actually a history major. When I got my second degree, my master's degree, it was a Master of Arts because I had all the art requirements.

I was in medieval history, and my graduate work was on a WARF Fellowship [Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation] as a paleographer, working with the documents of a couple of notaries in Genoa in the eleven and twelve hundreds. I also did some transcription of canon law. At that time I could read Latin quite well, medieval Latin. My one publication was a transcription of work by the notary Bonvillano.

I wrote my master's thesis on the English invasion of Ireland. That was sort of interesting--I actually proved something that hadn't been proved before. The English king wanted to invade Ireland, but he didn't have any money. So he borrowed money from the merchants of the city of Bristol which had a special



Burr: treaty with the king. In return for the financial support, the king gave the city the trading rights with the city of Dublin. I worked with the transcriptions of the Irish annals.

I was such an idiot! I had a total bibliography of all the English annals, which are fascinating documents, and the English is a little quaint. I had three drawers of three by five cards, and when I got my master's degree I said, "That's that!" and I threw them all away. Two years later, someone who was starting a new department of Gaelic languages wanted my bibliography, and of course I had destroyed it.

#### Joyce Meets 'Doc' Burr

Mead: You were educated at the University of Wisconsin, then. What else happened at this time?

Burr: Doc and I met. He came from Connecticut. He came out to Wisconsin for his doctorate.

Mead: What is his full name?

Burr: Horace Kelsey Burr. I've got to tell you the story of how I met him--I met him as a blind date. He seemed a little stuffy, but he was sort of interesting. I had gotten to know Dean Fred of the graduate school very well indeed. I had had this date on Saturday night, and the next day Doc called me up apartment and asked me to come for a glass of wine. I went down because I thought maybe I would meet his roommate again whom I thought was absolutely adorable.

But I had a very interesting evening with Doc, such an interesting evening that I decided to find out--he seemed so blasted young, but he was only a year younger than I am as it turned out.

On Monday morning I went down to Dean Fred's office, and I said, "Dean, I've got a question for you." He said, "Okay, go ahead." I said, "I met a young man I'd





Burr: like to know something about." He said, "Who is it?" I said, "Horace Kelsey Burr." He said, "Oh, I've got his papers right here on my desk." He fished around, and he held this thing out, and he said, "This is from Dr. Cady of Wesleyan University. 'No doubt Horace Burr is one of the most brilliant young chemists....'" I said, "I don't care about that--how old is he?" So he fished around and told me how old he was, and I said, "Thanks a lot." I decided I would date him.

Doc and I were married in 1938. After I got my master's degree, I stayed on as a T.A. partly because of the war. I wore my hair in a bun, and I was wearing glasses then. Robert Lopez was from Italy, and he came to the United States on my WARF scholarship because I gave it up for a year when Doc and I were married and spent a year in Mexico and Guatemala.

We were having lunch one day with friends after we got back, and Robert was there. I said something about Cassinese. He was one of the [Genoese] notaries I was working on at that time. Bob said, "What do you know about Cassinese?" And I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "What do you know about him?" I said, "For God's sake I typed his whole transcript." He said, "Who are you?" I said, "I'm Joyce Eierman Burr," and he said, "Oh, no, I'm talking about...she wears her hair in a...she wears glasses...." (laughs)

When I got pregnant with Stefan, I was getting ready for prelims, and that took care of my prelims, so I never did go on to the doctorate. We had a tradition at Wisconsin--skyrockets. There were five hundred kids in our freshman medieval class. One day I came into the big lecture hall, and I heard, "Siss, boom, baaa--mother!"

And in five of my quiz sections, they gave me gifts that had to do with taking care of a house. My first morning class was at Sterling Hall at the bottom of Bascom Hill. I was on the fourth floor and had to go down to the basement then climb the hill--it's quite a



Burr: hill, then to the fourth floor for my next class. I'd get up there, and I'd say. "We---will---now---have---a---ten---minute---quiz," and I'd write out the quiz on the board and pant for ten minutes.

### The Burrs Move to California

Mead: What brought you out to California?

We stayed in Madison until the war was over. We had such bad ragweed hayfever--all of us did. Madison had one of the highest pollen counts in the United States. We finally decided we couldn't stay there after the war. So Doc brought our two sons and me--in the meantime I had had another child--out to California. We went to San Diego which is where Doc was hoping he would find a job.

Mead: What was his work?

Burr: He had a Ph.D. in physical chemistry.

Mead: How did he acquire the name "Doc"?

Burr: Ah, that's interesting. He went to scout camp when he was about ten years old, and they were trying to give nicknames to various people. His name was Horace, and they said, "We can't call you Horace, that's not a good name." Someone asked, "What does your father do?" He said, "My father's a doctor," and they said, "Fine, we'll call you Doc." Doc's family never approved of this--only the village idiot ever called Doctor Burr "Doc." His family always called him Bill, but his friends called him Doc. That's where the name came from.

Anyway, we came out here. The two boys and I stayed in a motel in a little town called El Cajon which is now a huge community, I understand, near San Diego. We stayed there for some months while Doc got everything ready so he could leave the Forest Products Laboratory which is where he was working then.



Burr: In fact, the "mothball fleet" is Doc's mothball fleet. He was the second in command of his department, and they got a call from Washington, D.C., that they wanted the Forest Products Laboratory to come up with something that would protect fleets for fifty years, and they had a month to do it in. So that's when they developed the stuff they needed to use to store the fleet [of warships].

After this, he was offered a job at the Institute of Oceanography at half of his earlier salary. We decided to come up here [Bay Area] to look for work. Doc went to the Western Regional Research Laboratory and got a job there. He transferred within the U.S. Department of Agriculture, from his previous job at the Forest Products Lab to this lab.

We moved out to a little community called Rollingwood which is now part of San Pablo. While we were there we were very active in the Rollingwood Improvement Association. I also edited the Rollingwood News for a couple of years.

#### The Burrs Settle in El Cerrito

Burr: Then we moved here [El Cerrito] in 1951, and we've stayed in this house ever since. It was pouring down rain the day we went looking for houses. We'd seen another that I didn't like at all. But I had found one that has a very large yard, about a quarter of an acre.

Doc said very patiently, "I'll drive you up," and he parked out front. It was bastard Spanish--it had a little arch here and there, and a little red tile. I said, "It's most unprepossessing," but Doc said, "Well I did drive you all the way up." So I got out while he parked the car. I walked in the front door, and it felt like home. I just loved the house. Doc came in, and he liked it, too. We put an offer on it the next day, and we've lived here ever since. Our kids went through high school here.



Burr: My oldest son went to the University of California before he went East to get his doctorate at Princeton. My other son went to Chico [State University]. He had some graduate work but didn't finish it. He got married while he was still in college and had a child right away. My grandson--I adore him, he's wonderful, and he's getting married on the first of August. My son was divorced from his first wife when my grandson was about ten years old.





## PART II. ACTIVITIES LEADING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF CNPS

### The Tilden Botanic Garden and James Roof

Burr: When we came out from the East, we were delighted to find the botanic garden in Tilden Park. We didn't discover the garden until about 1947. By then, Jim [Roof] had done a lot of work on the garden. He was sent into the war--it was a nasty deal, in fact I have something here that can tell you what the nasty deal was.

Mead: It would be interesting to get your memories of the Tilden Botanic Garden itself, how and when Roof put it together.

Burr: He [Roof] started the garden again when the war was over, but he started it...let's see. [Reads from a document entitled "It's a Question of Troublemakers"<sup>1</sup>]: "The majority of the Park District Board favor the establishment..." this was back in 1939, "...of a unique and much-needed botanic garden. The district manager, Vail, opposed it. He wanted to copy McLaren's Golden Gate rhododendron dell or perhaps a fern glen, like one he'd seen in another park, but Vollmer led the prevailing majority and the garden was established." Actually, Jim did a lot of planting of ferns down by the creek before they officially began the garden.

"The construction of the garden began January 1, 1940, moving quickly with a hundred paid W.P.A. men on the job. For one critical stretch, he had three hundred men divided into three crews." They built the Sierra meadow, and in 1941 they built the redwood grove. This is a very valuable document.

Mead: And Roof was away at war for a couple of years?

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<sup>1</sup>"A Question of Troublemakers" is a 22-page document which Joyce has had in her files for many years. She could not remember who authored it, and even after research by both of us, we could never ascertain authorship of the document (see p. 14).



Burr: Four years, I think. "In February 1946, the garden was an incredible jungle. The weeds were everywhere, and the grass in the meadow was three feet tall, matted and tough to clear. The creek was a tangle of willows. Thickets of poison oak had reclaimed what had been pleasant open stretches. Only now there were no W.P.A. crews to help clean up. Now the job of getting the garden back was almost bigger than the original building job. But Jim saw his old job as a garden director. People who stayed home during the war were getting four hundred fifty dollars a month. Jim had to take the 1941 rate of the category of Senior Park Supervisor of one hundred thirty five dollars a month."

Anyway, we found the botanic garden and loved it. We went up there quite often, and we got to know Jim very well. Then, some time in late 1963 or early 1964, about the time I started attending Park District board meetings, I was talking to him, and he said, "You ought to belong to the Friends of the [Tilden Park] Botanic Garden." I said I didn't know there was one, and he said there was, and they were trying to fight [William Penn] Mott about a new place for the garden.

Mead: So your friendship with Jim Roof goes way back to the mid-40s. You were speaking about Roof being sent to war?

Burr: Elbert Vail was the head of the Park District. He was a close personal friend of Charles Lee Tilden. Everyone was afraid to blow the whistle on Vail who was doing some things that were pretty bad. [Reads from "It's a Question of Troublemakers".] "It became common knowledge before long that park trucks were being used, mostly at night, to haul much of what turned out to be the loot up to a site near Lake Tahoe where General Manager Vail just happened to be building a house for himself. He was the one responsible for the disappearances."

Some information was passed on to [August] Vollmer, and Roof went to the Alameda District Attorney, then Earl Warren. A complaint was filed with him, and Vail was



Burr: finally called in and showed the evidence, and then explained that conviction would result in a jail term, so Vail quietly retired. Jim was listed as the one who presented the evidence, so a complaint was made to Tilden. Jim had a deferment from the army. He spent one or two of his seven days a week at Fort Cronkite. He was a consultant in the use of native plants to camouflage the coastal artillery and so forth. The chairman of the Draft Board tried to talk to Tilden to interfere, but they insisted that Roof was a troublemaker, and he had to go to Europe.

Consequently, even though most of the employees of the [U.S.] Forest Service and Regional Park District were exempted from military service, they were assigned as fire wardens, etc., he was suspiciously drafted at age thirty one, the only Forest Service and Parks man to be called up during the first two years of the war. It was a really dirty trick.

In 1946, the garden was a jungle, ravaged by years of neglect. The only thing that was done was that they had turned on the sprinkler which at least saved the trees and shrubs. We [Joyce and Doc] saw it the next year when work was started on the jungle.

Mead: This is around 1947 or so?

Burr: Somewhere in 1947, I think. We used to take the kids up there for picnic lunches and to play on the grass in the open places.

#### Plans to Move the Botanic Garden

Mead: Was it in 1964, then, that Jim [Roof] suggested that you join the Friends of the [Tilden Park Botanic] Garden?

Burr: It was late 1963 or early 1964. Jim told me that Mott had this idea of a two to four hundred-acre site, and Jim opposed it. I said I was going to call up and find



Burr: out what's going on. There was a sign needed [at the garden] anyway--I had sent a friend to look for the silk tassel [shrub], and they couldn't find the botanic garden. I called, and I said I wanted to talk to the general manager, and I got Mott on the phone.

I said a sign was needed to mark the garden, and he said that I didn't want a sign because they were going to have this wonderful, huge botanic garden in Grass Valley. It's now called Chabot Park. I told him that I'm an old lady, and I didn't want a four-hundred-acre bot garden; I wanted one I could wander through like I could with the present one. There was a lot of discussion back and forth, and I talked to him several times.

At one point, I had found out what happened. Mr. Mott had sent Irwin Luckman to take people from the Friends of the Botanic Garden to various sites. The four people he chose were [A. E.] Wieslander, [Charles] Kraebel, Mae Arbogast and Owen Pearce.

What Irwin did was to take them to sites that were patently not possible, and then took them to this particular site [Grass Valley]. Somewhere in this document [refers to "It's a Question of Troublemakers"], it tells why this site was so bad. The old garden has a wonderful climate--it doesn't get the heavy fog often, but it gets enough so things don't get too dried out. It's sheltered from winds most of the time, and of course the creek runs through it--it's an ideal site for what's there.

It was then that Mott wrote various letters, saying things like "...no doubt the Sierra meadow will remain part of the park scene..." and "...we can't afford two botanic gardens..." and so forth<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup>See Collateral Documents, pp. 63 and 64.





Groups Form in Defense of the Botanic Garden

Burr: Once we saw this, that's when things really started rolling. In the meantime, I had gotten my Contra Costa Garden Committee<sup>3</sup> going. I started petitions, and Marion Copley started petitions.

Mead: The Contra Costa Garden Committee was formed because of the Tilden Botanic Garden controversy?

Burr: Yes, and so was Marion Copley's committee [Citizens for Tilden Park].

Mead: How did you and Marion Copley meet?

Burr: Marion and I met because I was at her house for some reason. Her husband was the head of the lab where Doc worked. When I was at their house, she and I got to talking about the botanic garden.

I told her all the stuff that was going on, and she said that it was perfectly terrible and that we had to do something about that. I told her I thought I would set up some sort of committee in Contra Costa and get signatures, and she said, "I'll get started right now and start getting signatures in Berkeley," which she did.

Marion and I went to the big meeting in May 1964, the Park District board meeting. Marion presented her petitions. Of course she made a tactical error which I had learned not to do by then--she attacked Mr. Mott personally instead of supporting the garden. Finally, Robert Gordon Sproul, who was Chairman of the board at that time, said, "Well, you seem to have got a fix on this man, Mrs. Copley." I knew then that we weren't going to win.

At this time, the Park District wanted Contra Costa County to join them [East Bay Regional Park District]. I had found out about a particular board meeting where

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<sup>3</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 65.



Burr: Mott had bragged that he was going to spend so much that they could say they didn't have any more money. But it became apparent that unless Contra Costa County joined them, they would be bankrupt.

Mott Becomes Park District Manager

Mead: When did Mott become manager of the Park District?

Burr: I believe it was around 1962.

Mead: So he started with his idea about a new site for the garden fairly early on?

Burr: Yes, fairly early on [reads from "It's a Question of Troublemakers"]. "A man of considerable energy and recognized for skill in land acquisition, he soon established a performance record which suggested a strong desire to order the garden's purposes if not eliminate it altogether." He first fired Robert Owen, and that broke my heart. Robert Owen was the dearest little man. He had been Jim's assistant for years, and he was just darling. "He [Mott] spent nearly a million dollars of surplus funds earmarked for land purchase. The money went for a great quantity of mechanical equipment.... Roof made no secret of his dislike for trivial bureaucratic exercises." Amen, he sure as hell didn't.

Mead: What are you reading from?

Burr: "It's a Question of Troublemakers," and I don't know who wrote this. It doesn't look like Alice Howard. But the facts, from what I know, are very good.

Getting back to the meeting of May 1964--this meeting certainly underlined the problem very well, and we knew what we were up against then. But in the meantime, there was this question of whether Contra Costa County was going to join the district or not. I tried to convince the gal who was in charge of the League of



Burr: Women Voters study that we should look into the financial structure of the [East Bay Regional Park] District before we wrote a blank check by joining them.

I said that this was a period of time where we could get some concessions if we get in there now. She said we had never put any money into the district, and we had used the parks all along, and Contra Costa would join no matter what. She said the League of Women Voters would have no business looking into the financial matters of the [East Bay Regional Park] District. Since she was in charge of this whole project, I just gave up. This was Ada Kresge--she has since died. So I decided to work with the people who wanted to join the district because I didn't want it to be known later on that I had fought it. So I gave several speeches, had a bumper sticker, and everything. I figured, all right, we better get in there and fight.  
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#### Mott's Vision for a New Botanic Garden Site

Mead: Getting back to the Grass Valley site, what do you think was behind Mott's idea to move the original botanic garden to a larger site?

Burr: There were four people from the Friends of the [Tilden Park] Botanic Garden who were in favor of Mott's idea to move the garden to Grass Valley--Kraebel, Wieslander, Arbogast and Pearce. They were all thinking, if they were thinking at all, not of a botanic garden. I'm sure that they were thinking of a botanic garden, but subconsciously they were really thinking an arboretum.

There was a site where they could have planted trees and shrubs--but a botanic garden isn't trees and shrubs. A botanic garden is an educational facility, and Jim's garden represented the various natural areas of the state: the desert, the Sierra, the meadow, the



Burr: redwoods, the Channel islands, and so forth. It was divided into various botanic areas of the state--you have everything from ground covers to redwood trees. The original site was ideal, very well chosen, especially the climate and the fact that there is a creek going through it<sup>4</sup>.

Now there was something else that happened. Mott had done a lot of timbering up on the [nearby] golf course, and there had been some stuff thrown into the creek. The creek jammed, and Jim nearly lost part of his garden--he spent about thirty six hours trying to clear the log jam so the water could go through. It was just a mess. There were some people there who didn't know what the hell they were doing.

Mead: I want to go back to the question of why Mott wanted to move the botanic garden to a new site.

Burr: Mott had seen Oglebay Park in West Virginia. There was a Center for the American Institute of Park Executives located there. It was an old slave farm. I think it gave him the idea of setting up an extremely expensive conference center down in the floor of Grass Valley. I was at the board meeting when they voted to go ahead with this extremely lavish business. It never went through, but they did vote in favor of it. I sat there with my mouth open with all the things they were going to have, and that's when I began to get the idea that there was something more to this than just wanting a new site for the botanic garden.

Mead: When did this meeting occur?

Burr: I don't remember the exact time. Someone told me that this place [Oglebay Park] existed and wondered if his idea for this particularly fancy center was because of Oglebay Park, that he could have a West coast complement of the East coast center.

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<sup>4</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 69.





Burr: I remember I sent for the Oglebay Park brochure, and they sent one. I recall thinking--here's Skyline Boulevard where the Park District office was, and you could drive along a ridge road, then the road down into the park. He could take visitors through this lovely scene of trees and so forth, then down into the valley where the conference center would be. I believe that's really what he had in mind. I never talked to him about this, and he never admitted to it, but it seemed very obvious when you saw what the plans were and what existed there.

### James Roof

Mead: It would be helpful to have character sketches of William Penn Mott and James Roof.

Burr: [Reads from a personal letter from Helen Mar-Beard dated 2 April 1983]: "The Four Seasons came yesterday. The back cover brought the shock of the passing of Jim Roof.... He certainly made his mark. No he wasn't a diplomat. He could have been more graceful in his language, but he laid a sound foundation. He worked, he worked effectively, he shared the results generously." This is from Helen Mar-Beard who was in charge of the native plant section of the UC Botanic Garden until she and Bob moved up to Trinidad [California].

Well, there's also the famous article by Rimo Bacigalupi about Jim, how as a boy he was interested in plants from the very beginning [California Horticultural Journal, January 1965]. He had San Bruno Mountain to climb on.

Later on, a park, the San Bruno Mountain State and County Park, was established there--we partially won that fight, but the total pattern of the mountain was lost. Jim lived facing San Bruno Mountain as a boy, and he tramped all over that mountain. He was an expert on San Bruno Mountain, and he never ever got around to writing about the flora there. Finally



Burr: Elizabeth McClintock and Walter Knight went ahead and wrote a flora, and Jim was furious! He had taken them around and showed them where everything was, but he didn't write about it.

Mead: How would you describe your relationship to him [Roof]?

Burr: Doc and he and I were very close friends. During this bot garden fight, quite often we'd go to a meeting and then end up having dinner. Jim was a great raconteur. He wrote well, and he spoke well. He was very interesting to be with, but there were times of course when you could break his neck. His devotion to plants was very real and very deep.

Mead: Describe some of the more difficult moments with him.

Burr: There were personality things--for instance when we'd go on a camping trip. He wouldn't say what he wanted, but he'd do things to get his own way, in such a way that drove Doc absolutely up the wall because my husband couldn't fight back.

One time we were on a trip up in Oregon--we'd gone up the high divide road, up on the plateau. It was one of the most beautiful evenings I had ever seen--there was fog below, and the tops of trees were above the fog. Jim had done three or four things that had made all of us very angry. Jim loved manzanitas.

We decided we were going to camp for the night up on this huge flat that was covered with manzanitas. Doc asked what they were, but he knew already because it was a very common manzanita. He poured himself a drink--we always had a happy hour. He got our little shovel out of the car, and he went out and dug up manzanitas, turning them upside down, all over this flat.

Jim knew exactly what Doc was doing, but he didn't dare say a word in protection of the manzanitas. So Doc told Jim exactly what he thought of him at that point.



Burr: If Jim didn't want to speak to anyone, and someone came into the botanic garden asking for him, Jim would say, "I haven't seen him," or something of that sort. If he didn't want to talk to anyone, he would pretend he wasn't Jim. He did this quite often depending on how much work he wanted to get done.

We never did get him to write a second botanic garden guide ["Guide to the Plant Species of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden"], but the first guide is an absolutely brilliant piece of work. I wish to heaven he had done more, but thank goodness he saved all the names and addresses of everyone who bought the first garden guide--that became the first mailing list for CNPS, the California Native Plant Society. We sent out a very large first mailing announcing our first meeting in October 1965. A lot of people came. It was a very successful meeting.

William Penn Mott, Jr

Mead: How would you describe Mott? Was he called Bill?

Burr: I don't think anyone ever called him "Bill" to his face--maybe they did. He did have a vision, and he was in favor of land acquisition. He also spent a tremendous amount of money--like setting up the stables down there in Redwood Park. Someone commented that it was an awful lot of money going to this particular thing; he said, "Well, the park should have things for the rich as well as the poor." That's how he defended his position.

From the time he came in, the office force grew like this [gestures largely], and the people in the field grew like this [opposite gesture]--so the office force got bigger and bigger and bigger. He had a PR man and so forth. So he was very heavy on administration. The only particular fight we got into in the early days--there were other things later on--was the botanic garden itself. As I started going to board meetings



Burr: regularly I was in on many various fights--like finally getting Huckleberry Trail. There were many things we fought for.

Later, there was a Governor's Conference in 1966 given by Governor [Pat] Brown on the environment, and I represented the City of El Cerrito. Norvell Gillespie help set this up. This was in Los Angeles, and I noticed Mott was there. He was getting ready to leave, and he came to me and said, "Are you going home?" I said I was going to stay over for a couple of days, and I didn't think why he asked me this.

I talked with a friend of mine when I got home. We had been trying to get funds from the City of Richmond to be used by the junior college on Brooks Island, the little island you can just see a tip of from here [points through her front room window]. The junior college had been doing work there on Indian middens. There was a project going on about a special breed of mice, also.

The island had been used by Bing Crosby and Trader Vic as a shooting club--they would bring in pheasants to shoot. Nice sportsmen! I had gotten a group together, and we had talked to [Assemblyman] Jack [John] Knox. We asked that the island be set aside not for the Park District but for college educational purposes. He said that was a very good idea.

When I returned from the Governor's Conference, I talked with him, and he said, "Joyce, I lost the battle. 'Save the Bay' just jumped down my throat. I don't know what happened, but I was overwhelmed by calls from 'Save the Bay.'" I talked with my friend and asked what the hell happened. She said Mott came to a meeting of 'Save the Bay' and convinced them that if they turned it [Brooks Island] over to the City of Richmond, it would be sold for housing. Well, I had read the enabling legislation and knew that this couldn't have been done, that the land would have to be used for educational or recreational purposes.





Burr: No one had bothered to read the enabling legislation. Mott knew I wasn't in town, he knew I wasn't going to be able to stop them. It was too late, and we lost that one. For twenty years the Park District owned the island, and for twenty years at every board meeting, I would get up and complain that the sportsmen were not really sportsmen, that it was like shooting fish in a barrel. Eventually I finally won. I never forgave him for that.

Mott's training was in landscape architecture. I don't think he really had the concept of a botanic garden as an educational institution, and especially something, as in Jim's case, that embraced the entire state. I really think he was thinking more of trees and shrubs and how pretty it would be. Arbogast was a landscape architect, too. Kraebel and Wieslander were more in forestry. This is more my emotional feeling than this is what he thought.

One thing I haven't addressed in any detail is what I felt about Mr. Mott as the years went on. He and I had argued over many things, as I've said, but when he went to the state [of California] to be head of the state parks, he was in a different situation.

One of the things I was very interested in were the rare plants. I met him one day, and we got to talking about Red Rock Canyon which is a perfectly beautiful spot about twenty miles north of Mojave [California]. It's a lovely area--in fact, it's so beautiful with these huge red cliffs that there's an Easter Sunday service there every year. It's a fantastic place. There are wonderful walks. Some of the very early cowboy and Indian movies were filmed there.

In any case, I said to Mr. Mott that I was worried about a rare plant, and he said, "Oh, you mean the tarweed [Hemizonia arida]." I said yes, and he said, "The one in the culvert." He knew exactly what he was talking about. That really pleased me because I knew that he was taking a real interest because this is a small area. This is a plant not known anywhere--it's a very rare plant.



Burr: When Reagan was considering him to become head of the state parks service, there was a man who was very interested in real estate who was also being considered. Many of us were very happy that Mott was chosen because of this consideration--and as it turned out, it was even better than that; he did a very good job on most of the things I know about.

When Mott went to the federal parks service, there was a question again of having the sort of person we now have, James Ridenour. But Mott was really interested in parks and interested in saving a large amount of wilderness land which is terribly important.

I was very pleased when he let the fire in Yellowstone Park burn [in 1988]. That is certainly the most important thing that can be done to maintain a park--to get rid of some of the tremendous brush. The parks can't do much burning of brush because there is a lot of screaming about it. If you don't burn out the undercover and all the duff, you are going to have one terrible fire, as we saw not only in Yellowstone Park but here in our own hills in Berkeley [and Oakland in 1991].

Mr. Mott was absolutely right in doing what he did in letting the fire burn. There has been a lot of excitement since then when all the visitors to Yellowstone have seen all the marvelous stuff that grew out after the fire--it's simply wonderful. As an example, many areas in California have closed cone pines which don't reproduce unless there is a fire. So it was a terribly important thing that Mott did, and he did it under a great deal of pressure. I have nothing but good to say about his decision.

I was very sorry to read today [23 September] that he died this week. I think he did a very fine job [in the national parks service]. He has done some very important work since he left the state parks service [of California]. He became President of the California State Parks Foundation. He was President Emeritus when



Burr: he died. He also spent roughly ten years managing the East Bay Zoological Society. In any case, he kept up with his park work until he died, right to the very end.

I felt that I wanted to point out that even though I had my difficulties with him in the beginning, I learned to respect what he did.

Mead: Do you remember the Grass Valley site?

Burr: Oh, yes, Jim took me there.

Mead: How would you describe it?

Burr: Here's this long sloping hill down into a valley, and Jim pointed out something like seven slides that we could see from up above, a slide here and there. He said, "You can't put up a botanic garden on this kind of a slope." He drove me all around, and he was right. It might have been an arboretum, but it surely couldn't have been a botanic garden. The climate was wrong, there were different exposures--it wouldn't have worked.

There were sites in Contra Costa County that we were hoping to get into the Park District, and we worked hard on those. Point Pinole was one of them. Mott was warned, when he went to talk with Bethlehem Steel, not to mention "eminent domain," because if he did they would dig in their heels. When Mott went to see them the story is that at some point he finally got mad and said he could always go to condemnation proceedings. So it was a much longer fight than we had hoped.

Mead: Bethlehem Steel was located at Point Pinole?

Burr: There was a steel plant there and an ammunitions plant there. We finally did get Point Pinole. Mary Jefferds had more to do with it than anyone else on the board or staff. She was on the Park Board for a good many years. ##

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PART III. FOUNDING OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIVE  
PLANT SOCIETY

Controversy Over the Tilden Botanic Garden

Mead: Last time, you talked about [William Penn] Mott and [James] Roof which has led us up to 1964, the time of the controversy around the Tilden Botanic Garden.

Burr: Yes, that's when it began.

Mead: What kinds of activities were going on at that time?

Burr: Well, of course, 1964 was when we first went before the Park District Board of Directors when Robert Gordon Sproul was President of the Board. There were a lot of us who spoke in favor of keeping the garden where it was and not moving to this much larger site--on the basis of size, it was much too large, and the site was a poor site<sup>5</sup>.

There were people like Lincoln Constance, who was then the vice-chancellor, or something on that level, at the University of California, and Herbert Baker who was in the Botany Department, and of course Leo Brewer. Marion Copley was also there, as I mentioned before, who gave quite a long harangue, all of it perfectly justified, but so strong that Sproul told her that she had a fix on Mott.

Mead: Were these people members of various groups working to save the garden?

Burr: Some of them were members of the Friends of the Botanic Garden except for the four people [Arbegast, Wieslander, Kraebel, Pearce] who voted for the new site--they were the only ones who voted for the new site. The rest of the Friends voted to leave the garden where it was.

<sup>5</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 70.





Burr: This was also the time when the Park District needed to get more money, and they thought that Contra Costa County should join the district. So some of the energy devoted to the garden was a little diffused by this happening. I had previously set up my Contra Costa Garden Committee, and we had started to collect signatures to keep the garden where it was.

### Jim Roof is Fired

Burr: It wasn't until they fired Jim Roof that we decided we had to focus much more strongly in an organized group with a leader.

Mead: When exactly did the firing take place?

Burr: As I recall, it was sometime after the first of the year, in 1965.

Mead: What were the circumstances around Roof's being fired?

Burr: Mott had gone to Australia for a month, and it was during that period that Robert Mauler took over as acting manager of Tilden Park. Perry Laird was a supervisor. The way I remember it, and the way most of my friends remember it, was that Perry Laird gave Jim this rather outrageous list of things he had to do in a month, and if he didn't he would be fired. Jim didn't do them, partly because it would have taken an awful lot of people to help do it--they wanted every plant listed, that kind of nonsense.

So Jim was fired, and I think he was fired before Mott got back. That really blew things up. All of us were working--the Contra Costa Garden Committee, the people working with Marion Copley [Citizens for Tilden Park], all the people from the Friends of the Botanic Garden.

We all got together at a meeting at Mulford Hall. Mary Wohlers says she called that meeting. I know we put out brochures and made telephone calls and everything.



Burr: At this meeting, we set up a committee called the "Save the Garden" Committee.

Mead: Are The Friends of the Garden and the "Save the Garden" Committee two separate organizations?

Burr: They are totally different. The Friends of the Botanic Garden came first, and this was the one who sent out the four people who looked at the various places Mott wanted them to see. The "Save the Garden" Committee I think was formed in 1965<sup>6</sup>.

Leo Brewer accepted the chairmanship for the committee. Leo Brewer was a very prestigious person. Every year the University of California selects one person that they consider an outstanding scholar and individual, and Leo was awarded that one year. He has the largest native plant garden of anyone in the Bay Area that we know of. It's a fantastic native garden. He is very important from the botanical point of view and also because of his general personality--he is a tremendously nice guy.

We planned a series of lectures and other things. We continued to work on petitions and tried to alert all the garden clubs in the area about the situation. Not all the garden clubs were supportive because some of them felt that Jim, as I told you, did not always have the habit of saying who he was if he didn't feel like it.

Generally speaking, though, there was really a large assembly of people. We insisted we wanted a hearing with the Park District--it was set for May 11. There were some good newspaper articles for this--Mary Ellen Perry, Gaile Russ--there were some good reporters who did very straightforward reporting. That was very helpful. We had the press on our side in a sense.

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<sup>6</sup>See Collateral Documents, pp. 82 and 89.

<sup>7</sup>See Collateral Documents, pp. 83, 88, 90 and 93.



Burr: Many people wrote letters to editors--Herbert Baker's letter<sup>3</sup> was included and quoted various times. We did have a great push with the press about all of this. Then, it was very shortly after the May 11 meeting that we decided to go ahead and proceed with setting up an organization that would permanently oversee the garden.

#### The Future of the Garden is Determined

Mead: The May 11 meeting was held, then, to determine what was going to be done about the Tilden Botanic Garden?

Burr: (Nods) They came to the Brazilian Room. It was a three-man committee meeting of members of the Park Distric Board. Marlin Haley, I think, chaired that meeting. He was actually very much on our side--not out loud and officially, but by the way he spoke, we knew that he was a sympathetic ear.

There were three board members--it would have been an official meeting if there had been four members because of Brown Act, but there were three members. I can't remember exactly who the other two were--it may have been John Macdonald who also was somewhat sympathetic. Haley is the one who sticks in my mind. He was a tremendously nice guy.

I have gotten to be quite fond of a few of the board members over the years, but Marlin Haley was very good. The only speaker at this meeting I recall who was not sympathetic to keeping the garden in its place and not enlarging it was Robert Stebbins who was a biologist--not G. Ledyard Stebbins, he was a geneticist.

Interestingly enough, Dick Trudeau, who had become the public relations man for the Park District, in his news release made it sound to people who had not been to this meeting that Owen Pearce--the four who were in favor of the Grass Valley site--had presented their point of view at the meeting. But that did not happen,

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<sup>3</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 63.



Burr: they were not at the meeting. It was apparent at this meeting that the Park District was not going to move the botanic garden to this larger site<sup>1</sup>.

Mead: Was there any reason given for that?

Burr: The California Native Plant Society was not yet in existence then, but the core of the CNPS were the speakers at this meeting--we made it very plain that we were going to report to the board to drop the plan for the larger garden. It was after this meeting, when we all met at the Beard's, that we decided it was the time to move away from the "Save the Garden" Committee--it was evident that we had succeeded. Now we should do something further to keep an eye on the garden--that was our original purpose.

#### Jim Roof Is Reinstated

Mead: Simultaneous to the meeting of May 11, was Roof reinstated?

Burr: As soon as Jim was fired, I got in touch with John Dunn to see if he would act as his attorney. I'd known John for years. A hearing was held for Jim, and at some point--I don't know if it was Mott or someone from the Park District--said something about this being the first go-around.

John Dunn said they were on record for what they had said, and if they [Park District] proceeded, he would bring a suit against the district if Jim was fired again. Jim was never fired again. John did a very fine job and essentially saved the garden because if Jim had been gone at that point, I don't know what would have happened.

I believe the hearing on Jim was some time before the May 11 meeting, I don't remember exactly. I remember

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<sup>1</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 95.





Burr: reading something about his being reinstated--it must have been before that. There was a tremendous amount of activity going on between January 1 and May 11 of 1965, a lot of activity going on all that time. Most of our meetings of strategy were held at the Beard's house. It was sort of an ad hoc group with people from various groups.

Marion Copley wanted to expand the garden to be much larger. Originally, the Park District had set aside twenty acres for the garden. There was a difference of opinion as to how many acres could be added. One of the reasons that Marion Copley dropped out when we set up the California Native Plant Society is that we hadn't supported her for this much larger garden, partly because we knew the Park District wasn't going to buy it. We felt we wanted to preserve what we had rather than lose the ball game.

Mead: How would you describe Marion Copley?

Burr: She was a very brilliant woman, an iris hybridizer. She was quite interested in birdsongs and knew all the birdsongs in California, I'm sure. She had an extensive record collection on those. She was a very determined woman. She found it hard to compromise with people. I think I told you what she said to Susan Frugé one time: "I don't want you to get close to Joyce because she'll take you away from me."

She felt very threatened by the fact that I had so many people working for me. That's why Doc and I didn't put our names down on the CNPS sponsor list because we felt that she needed to feel important. She had just devoted her soul to try to save the garden and also to expand it a very long distance along Wildcat Canyon Road. Others wanted to extend it on down the creek where all the ferns were, and there was some talk of moving the fence back and forth.

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<sup>10</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 96.



Burr: One of the problems with the Park District was that they continued, no matter what happened, to do things that would be heckling. For example, Jim needed to have a certain section fenced, and they didn't want to fence it. Of course deer can jump an eight-foot fence if they have a run, and there were places where the fence needed improvement. So we had to continue to fight for the garden as time went on even though we saved the garden.

### The California Native Plant Society is Born

Mead: I want to go back to the time just following the May 11 meeting during which it appeared that the garden was saved. Some of the people in support of this got together as a group to organize more officially and became CNPS?

Burr: Yes, and that's when Helen-Mar~~a~~ Beard and Bob Beard gave me the first two dollars to the group, not yet officially CNPS, for me to make a telephone call to make an appointment with Elsa Knoll [of Sunset magazine]. Bach--you know who Bach is, Rimo Bacigalupi--Bach was a member of the board of the California Botanical Society, and I met him for lunch to ask him where we should go next to get information about how to set up a botanical society like the California Botanical Society. He said I had to talk with Elsa Knoll in Palo Alto because she knew the whole story.

That's when I went to see her, and she gave me almost three hours that afternoon. Part of the time she wanted to talk about Jim Roof, in fact most of the time she wanted to talk about the whole fight with Mott. I don't think she was too fond of Mott, and she was very fond of Jim. Everybody knew Mott, of course, because he had been the head of the Oakland parks for years.

She told me various things including the fact that our attorneys should get in touch with Marshall Madison immediately because he was the attorney who tried to



Burr: get tax-exempt status for the California Botanical Society. They had had a terrible time getting tax-exempt status for them, but he had learned what to do. John [Dunn] called Madison, and he told us how to go through with the tax-exempt procedure which we got in six weeks. John served without any fee.

So talking with Elsa Knoll was very useful, and the most helpful thing she gave me was to get in touch with Marshall Madison. John Dunn was the one who officially got in touch with him. So John not only worked to save Jim's job, but he was also was our attorney for setting up tax-exempt status.

Mead: How did you come to use the name California Native Plant Society?

Burr: Now that I can't tell you precisely. There was a meeting in early August, and a bunch of us had gotten people lined up like Maxine Trumbo to be our secretary and Richard Loosley to be our treasurer. When we got our corporation papers ready, I took them down to our local sanitary district and had them all notarized.

I had to drive my son and his girlfriend to Chico for school entrance exams, so I was not at the meeting where the group was named. Mary Wohlers may have been the one to suggest the name, but I don't really know who did. I had decided by then that if they couldn't function as an organization without me at every single meeting, it was ridiculous. I like to set up organizations and then somebody else takes over so I can go on to the next thing.

When I got back from Chico, I heard they had decided to broaden the scope. The garden theoretically had been saved, we would be sure the Park District wouldn't try to get in there again--although they did try one other time, and I'll tell you about that later<sup>11</sup>.

As I said, somebody at that meeting, I don't know who it was, suggested that we broaden the group--after all,

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<sup>11</sup>See Collateral Documents, pp. 97 and 98.



Burr: California native plants are so important--and call ourselves the California Native Plant Society. This happened at the August meeting<sup>12</sup>, somewhere around the ninth or tenth, I don't remember. I was not at that meeting.

#### Early Months of CNPS

Mead: So CNPS was incorporated and gained tax-exempt status, and they continued to have meetings. Were these at Helen-Mar<sup>4</sup>Beard's house?

Burr: We held meetings from time to time at Helen's house when there was going to be something coming up at a Park District board meeting. We kept a pretty close eye on the District.

As time went on, I was the only one who went to all the District meetings--I must have to gone to all their meetings for some fifteen years. I took on BART and a few other things as well. I don't go to all the meetings any more, but I do go to all the budget hearings, because I'm an honorary member of the budget committee. And for twenty years, I've heckled them about why we didn't get Brooks Island. It's finally open, and the "sportsmen" are gone.

Now some of the early CNPS board meetings were held at Mac Laetsch's house, Watson Laetsch. Of course I went to all of the early meetings, too. I wasn't on the board, but I went to them because my husband was on the board.

We had our first public meeting--I think it was the twenty-fifth of October in 1965. Paul Zinke gave a very interesting lecture. He was talking about the Sicily and southern Italy Mediterranean climate which is essentially what we have here, and how similar the flora is in both places.

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<sup>12</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 99.





Burr: It was fascinating because there is a tremendous similarity--the maquis is like the chaparral and so forth. I still remember a good bit of the lecture. We had a very good audience, at least two-thirds of the room in Mulford Hall [U. C. Berkeley] where it was held. We had our meetings there from then on.

Mead: It sounds like 1965 was a year of tremendous activity.

Burr: Oh, it was! In fact, my car, I swear to God, could have driven from here to the botanic garden and back all by itself. There was a period in there when I drove every day of the week, except for Saturdays and Sundays and sometimes even those days just to look at the garden and coner with Jim. Sometimes I even went back a second time during a day. I don't know how much gas I used, but it must have been a tremendous amount of gas (laughs)!

Mead: During this time, Roof had been reinstated. Was he the only person working on the garden?

Burr: As I said before, one of the sad things was that Mott had fired Robert Owen, but Roof insisted that he had to have more help. By pushing this, he did get more help, and the Park District did raise the budget. We didn't get the same darling man back, Robert Owen, whom I just adored, but we did get other people in the garden. So we succeeded little by little to raise the garden's budget and to increase the staff.

Mead: What were some of the chief topics or issues that came up for discussion during the early months of CNPS?

Burr: Of course when you set up a new organization, you have to do a lot of things. One of the first things, as I told you, was use the garden guide list to send out announcements about CNPS, that the society exists, what it costs, and so forth. Then we did organize the first public meeting, and that took a lot of organizational work because we got in touch with all sorts of people and newspapers in two counties. I got a list of all the newspapers in both counties so we could use these for publicity.



Mead: So you personal involvement in CNPS in the beginning was getting information out to the public. Do you recall anything about the financial situation with CNPS?

Burr: We had a list of sponsors in the beginning. Everyone of those sponsors was contacted by a member. I got in touch with Norvell Gillespie who was Mr. Green Thumb at that time. I was on the "Green Thumb" program, a T.V. program. He was also Mr. Green Thumb for Better Homes and Gardens. He was a well known gardener.

Mead: How did you get people to become sponsors?

Burr: I called them and asked them to be sponsors and to give us twenty dollars. Every sponsor on that list gave us at least twenty dollars to start. That was our first financing. I suppose some people gave more. For example, I invited four families: the Falconers, the Tuddenhams, Norvell Gillespie, and the Flemings. Mary Wohlers got Chester Nimitz and Earl Warren. Leo Brewer got Edwin McMillan and Glenn Seaborg, Nobel laureates. There were a fair number of people on that list, and it gave us a couple of hundred dollars to get started. That was our initial financing. Additional financing was from dues.

#### State CNPS Chapters Form

Mead: At this time, it was strictly a local venture, then?

Burr: Yes. Now very soon on, the Gualala area set up the Dorothy King Young Chapter. And also soon on, Helen Funkhauser set up the Sierra-Santa Monica chapter, and they finally changed their name to the Santa Monica Mountains Chapter. Florence and Warner Marsh set up the Sacramento Chapter.

Those were the first three chapters, and we decided early on that we would encourage chapters throughout the state, that that would be the best way to spread the idea of the California Native Plant Society. It would have cost an infinite amount of money to try to



Burr: contact the whole state. So this is how the society has grown, with chapters being set up here and there and people in those areas being encouraged to join. We now have twenty nine chapters.

Mead: It's really interesting that the idea caught on in such a large way early on. Some organizations struggle for years to achieve that kind of growth.

Burr: There is a note somewhere where Dorothy King Young said that Helen Mar-Beard said that I started the society. Dorothy was at the meeting when they picked the name because she had close ties to the Bay Area. She has written a book, something called Redwood Empire Wildflower Jewels, a marvelous little book about wildflowers. She's a darling gal, quite aged now and also blind. Every August she calls me to thank me for having helped set up the California Native Plant Society.

#### Jim Roof's Expertise in the Botanic Garden

Burr: I think Helen Funkhauser knew James Roof--Jim was known throughout the state. He was very well known, and the botanic garden was well known throughout the state. He had relationships with many people, some of them friendly, sometimes not. People knew him well, and he was very highly respected for his horticultural knowledge and his attempts to try to save many of the state's endangered or rare plants which he tried to plant in the garden.

Mead: Were there other gardens quite like this in the state of California, do you recall?

Burr: Not arranged quite the way Jim did his, but in southern California there are some. ##

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Burr: In the Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, I know there is a native section because I've been in it. It's not laid out the way Jim's is. There is a Los Angeles County Botanic Garden, I'm not sure of the name--they also have a section of native plants. There is a foundation down there that deals entirely with native plants. These gardens existed alongside Jim's garden which was the only native plant garden in the northern part of the state.

One of the miracles was that he was growing things from the desert, part of which the District helped to destroy but which was brought back. He had plants from the Channel Islands which is most unusual in northern California because he succeeded in being able to grow many plants from these islands. Jim had tried to build, stone by stone, a building in the garden which the Park District finally tore down and then put in the fancy garden center we now have, renamed for Jim.

In any case, he had managed to grow a desert apricot--the District didn't pay any attention to it when they tore the building down and destroyed it. He asked them please to save it, but they did not, and he was not able to grow it again. That was one of the fights we lost. I rather liked the fact that there was this strange stone wall--it was the very beginning of a building and provided for full sun on the wall, so this gave the intense desert heat that the desert apricot needed. He was very proud of the fact that the apricot was doing so well.

There was never any sensitivity on the part of the District for the garden itself. I want to tell a story here. Mott had said Jim couldn't use gasoline any more to kill the Armillaria mellea, the honey mushroom, which gets into the roots of the dogwood tree. Jim had been using it every year to control it so he could grow the dogwood.

When he had to stop using it, he had a lot of trouble with Armillaria in that particular section of the garden, and he lost the two dogwoods there. When Mott





Burr: retired, friends couldn't understand why I was giving him a gift, but I was giving him a framed copy of a wood engraving I had made of the dogwood in Tilden Park that died because of him.

Mead: It sounds as if the garden is a very fragile environment.

Burr: Certain sections are very fragile. The garden needed people who were willing to take Jim's judgment about what his garden needed, but the District had blanket rules and made no exceptions.

By the way, when Jim was working on the drainage for the original garden, they put in pipes about this size (gestures about eighteen to twenty four inches in diameter) to carry water down the slopes into the creek, tremendous things. Jim had pictures of all this, and nobody knows where they've gone now. I wish now I had taken them from him, just said I wanted them for the file, but I didn't ask him, and they disappeared.

So there's very impressive drainage for the garden, and there would have been a lot of slides in storms if he hadn't done that tremendous job. This was done probably when he got back from the war in the mid nineteen forties. I'm probably the only one who had ever seen those pictures!

Now some people didn't like his stonework. When he decided he would put plants from Point Reyes, he built a whole series of rock walls and trails down to the creek. That's where he planted a thing that called Clarkia amoena Joyce Burr, and this has since died out in the garden. It was the only time anyone ever named a plant for me. (laughs)

#### Advice From Paul Hutchison

Mead: I want to go back to 1965 when CNPS was officially formed. There was a person you mentioned at one time, Paul Hutchison.



Burr: Yes, at that time he was helping to set up a society for the huge botanic garden on Oahu--I don't remember the name of the garden. I knew that he had been active in organizing botanic societies, so I went down to see him. I spent the good part of a day, and he gave me a lot of information. In fact he gave me his tentative first report, a shortened report, to them [the botanic garden on Oahu].

Mead: Did you see him around the same time that you saw Elsa Knoll and others?

Burr: No, Elsa Knoll was in the very beginning. It was after that. He gave us various ideas, and one was that we should have a good publication--this was very important, not just a newsletter but some kind of journal.

#### Attempts to Establish a CNPS Newsletter

Burr: That's when Leo Brewer and I talked Jim Roof into letting CNPS have the Four Seasons, which Jim was already publishing by himself. He had started it and copyrighted it. Jim said, yes, he would let us have the Four Seasons. However, he wanted to do two more issues before he turned it over to us.

In the meantime, the society had decided to have Mary Wohlers be secretary and have a paid office, which was a terrible mistake because we couldn't afford it. We overreached ourselves. Leo Brewer and I were supposed to review the copy because Jim always put a lot of pejorative stuff in about Roman Gankin who was down on the peninsula. Jim and he had had a fight over manzanitas--which manzanita was which and this sort of stuff. Roman was a good friend of Mary Wohlers'. Leo and I read the first copy and took out some of the pejorative stuff--I mean you can call a person a liar but not call him a liar, you can say you have a difference of opinion. Jim couldn't do that!

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<sup>11</sup>See Collateral Documents, p. 100.



Burr: Then Leo had to leave town, and I read some of the copy and took some of it out. Theoretically, Jim was supposed to let Leo read it, but I think Leo got back too late to do that because Jim's publication deadline. This issue was supposed to go through the office and be mailed out. Well, Mary Wohlers was just furious, and she wouldn't mail it out.

When Jim found out she hadn't mailed it out, he was furious because he was about to lose his copyright, so he said we couldn't have the Four Seasons and took it away. This was in 1966.

But a good publication was one of Paul's very good suggestions. He even suggested that when we got enough money we might publish a full-color cover page which we couldn't afford at first, but that idea never worked out. He gave us ideas about how many people you need for a board of directors and so forth, very practical things. It was very well worth my time to speak to him, and I have the report he gave me.

I reported my talk with him to the board meeting. We had board meetings before we had our first public meeting because we were doing all this organizational stuff.

Mead: Were these board meetings held about once a month?

Burr: In the beginning I don't know how often, but it was fairly often because there were a lot of things to decide. If we couldn't get someone to do a particular job, we would get together and brainstorm it, and people would come up with two or three suggestions. Then certain of us were assigned to talk to other people. There was a lot of organizational stuff that went on. There were at least two or three board meetings from the August meeting when they named the society to that first public meeting in October.

Mead: Going on a bit from the incident around the Four Seasons--what kind of decision did you make once you couldn't use this publication for your own?



Burr: We would bring out a newsletter. The first newsletter was brought out in October 1965. Have you seen the copy where Alice Howard is very outspoken about Mott? That was the first one--I wish to heavens I had kept it. She did a lot of writing--for posters and notices and so forth, and I would check to see if it was okay. I can say very nasty things in very polite language. So we told Alice that we couldn't send the newsletter out. There were only a few copies of that first one. Then we sent out a revised version.

So we had the newsletter, and eventually some years later, we finally decided we needed a journal like the Fremontia. Then there was a fight over the name Fremontia. Jim said we shouldn't name anything after John C. Fremont because after all he had said "the only good Indian was a dead Indian." Jim just blew up at a board meeting, he was just furious--he would never have an article in the Fremontia! Of course he changed his mind. People argued--well, it's not Fremont that we're talking about, it's the plant now called Fremontodendron.

#### Further Memories About Early CNPS

Burr: Jim was really fun to have around, you see, he was always stirring up some kind of controversy (laughs), and a good part of the time he was right--sometimes he was wrong, too. He wrote very well, and he could give a great lecture any time he wanted to. In fact quite often you'd go up to the garden to talk about one specific plant, and he'd keep you there for two hours talking about something else. He was so interesting you didn't leave!

As well as maintaining the garden, he was doing a tremendous amount of field work. He went out with the various workers in his garden, and then the CNPS, very early on, had field trips all over, up to Eureka, down south to the desert, the foothills, the high Sierra. Jim quite often was on these field trips. That's how we met a lot of people from other parts of the state.





Burr: I remember when I met some gals from Santa Rosa, and that's when they set up Milo Baker Chapter. I was Chapter Affairs Chairman, and every place we went I would talk chapters, and so did others in the society.

Little by little we expanded throughout the state. We've had presidents from the southern part of the state, the northern part of the state, the middle part and so on. In the beginning, it was the Bay Area, and I'm sure you've heard that they finally set up a San Francisco Chapter and an East Bay Chapter and a Marin Chapter.

Mr. "Nick" Niccum ran the Stuart Howe Alumni Association for U. C. Berkeley, and he handled all the mailing for that organization. He decided to take on the mailing for CNPS and did a very good job of that. I was Chapter Affairs Chairman and then Membership Chairman for CNPS for something like ten years, and I would send out information to the chapters about every four to six weeks.

Then the decision was made to organize a state office and hire a different mailing firm because they thought it would be cheaper and so forth. But for quite a while some of the chapters were very unhappy because they didn't get needed information nearly as often or as complete as what I had set up. Of course they didn't ask me one thing about membership when the state office was organized, so they did have quite a few troubles in the beginning because there were things they couldn't foresee happening that I would have known could happen. ##

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#### CNPS' Office on University Avenue and Mary Wohlers

Mead: I would like to go back a little bit and hear your memories about the office that CNPS rented on University Avenue in Berkeley and Mary Wohlers as secretary at that time.



Burr: The CNPS board decided to go ahead with this office. I was not in favor of it at the time, but I wasn't on the board, and I didn't speak against it. It was a nice small office, but we didn't have enough money to really buy a lot of books--we had some things for sale there. They were paying Mary a salary, I don't remember how much. Of course in today's terms, it would probably seem very low, but in those days it was high because of our budget. Finally, we just decided we couldn't afford it any more.

We consulted John Dunn, and he said, "you can't fire her until you pay her off." That's when they had the first plant sale. Susan Frugé, as far as I know, organized it. Mary Rhyne was very active in it along with a lot of other people. We made enough money to pay Mary Wohlers off, and we were able to dismiss her. I've forgotten the exact timing, but G. Ledyard Stebbins came in that year.

Mead: Did Watson Laetsch resign?

Burr: Let's see--he had actually been active for a full year because he was in on the very beginning. I think it was early 1966. Then G. Ledyard Stebbins came in, and he was there a long, long time, a number of years.

Mead: How did Mary Wohlers respond to being fired?

Burr: She never wrote anything to me, but she wrote letters to a lot of people. And of course she was very upset about the whole thing.

#### G. Ledyard Stebbins Asks Joyce to be Chapter Affairs Chairman

Mead: So G. Ledyard Stebbins became president, probably some time toward the end of 1965? 1966

Burr: Yes, some time in there. Then, not too long after he became president was when he asked me if I would become Chapter Affairs Chairman. We only had about five or



Burr: six chapters at the time, and I said I would. Chapters would get in touch with me if they had questions about various things.

Some years later I decided we had to have some kind of a chapter organization document--we set up an organizational book explaining what the society was, including things like what you had to do when you started a chapter, bylaws and insurance coverage information--there was an awful lot of stuff in that book. That was a very worthwhile thing to do--I wrote that.

In fact I wrote several of those, and I was ready to do another one when they wanted to change the format. I said I could change all those things by cutting and pasting, and it would take about two months. They decided they wanted to do it another way, and it took almost a year for them to do it. I remember that various organizations around the United States in their birth throes got in touch with the society, and we'd send them copies of the book showing them the sort of structure they could have.

There were, for years, wildflower societies in quite a few of the Eastern states. There's quite a large group of people now that have native plant societies in their state or the equivalent of it.

#### G. Ledyard Stebbins as CNPS President

Mead: Ledyard Stebbins was in Sacramento until he assumed the presidency?

Burr: He lived in Davis and was on the faculty at UC Davis, and he still lives there but also has a house in Berkeley. He's a doll of a man. In fact, a friend said she would like to have given a two-hour dinner with G. Ledyard Stebbins to the KQED Auction. I told Ledyard, and he said, "Tell her not to do that!" People really adored him. I don't think he would have asked me to be the Chapter Affairs Chairman if he were any longer in close connection with Mary. That's my guess.



Burr: Now Leavard was not only a good president, but he handled board meetings very well. He did very interesting things. He went down--I'm sure he was as heartbroken as I was--to the forest in Monterey where there is a very special cypress. He took us there on a field trip. He took us on various field trips--he was good at lending his time to things like that. I was on a desert fieldtrip with him, down to Red Rock Canyon and the Mojave and that whole section of the desert.

He was a very active president. I learned from him what a Compositae is--a daisy is one, and if you pull the petals off you'll see that everything is a sort of little individual plant. In botanical circles, Compositae are usually known as DYC's--"Damn Yellow Compositae."

Mead: After the first plant sale, then, the sales became an annual event?

Burr: They were done every year from then on. Now, many of the chapters have their own plant sales, and of course we have a huge plant sale for the East Bay Chapter now where we make a lot of money. In the beginning, when more and more chapters were being formed and they didn't have a lot of money, some of our plant sale money was used to help the chapters--I've forgotten how that was worked out.

#### Rare Plant Handbook

Burr: Do you know about our rare plant handbook? This was something that was started early on. Alice Howard was very active in that. She collected a huge number of rare plant slides from various people. I don't remember when the first handbook was brought out.

In 1986 we had a huge conference--over seven hundred people attended--industry, government, private people<sup>14</sup>. Our keynote speaker was Paul Ehrlich. At

<sup>14</sup>From this conference, 5-8 November 1986, came the Conservation and the Maintenance of Rare and Endangered Plants, ed. by Thomas Elias. See also Collateral Documents, p. 115.





Burr: this conference. we found out that half of the states have plant conservation laws. and of course that was unheard of when all of this started.

Mead: How did the rare plant handbook get started?

Burr: G. Ledyard Stebbins had the first idea of CNPS listing rare plants. To illustrate the status reports, Alice Howard and a committee worked on the handbook. The first thing that came out was a kind of mimeographed sheet, and then finally we went to a different format. This was for the state. Alice became the first Chairman of the CNPS Rare Plant Committee. Later, the work was transferred to Arcata, then they finally took over the rare plant studies up there for the whole state. Jim Smith was involved with that, and so was John Sawyer and his wife.

When everything was shifted to a new location, and they were getting a lot of things to Sacramento, they wanted Alice to turn her files of slides over to them. She insisted on doing what I think was right. Every slide that she had gotten, she had said, "If you ever want them back, or you don't want them used for other purposes, let me know." She had to get in touch with everybody, and they did respond. Doc asked to have his particular slide back--a Lilium pitkinense. So there was some friction between Alice and the guys up at Humboldt State University.

She finally did turn them over. Did she ever do a fantastic job! She had these mammoth, mammoth books with every slide carefully identified--it was beautiful. I handed them over to the state people at a board meeting, she asked me to handle that for her. She did a beautiful job, and I don't she was ever fully appreciated for the work done.

I think there is another handbook just about to come out. In the early times, we were much more dedicated just to the plants themselves, and of course now there's more interest in habitat. So now, in a sense, the Native Plant Society is expanding its horizons, which is important.



Additional Memories of CNPS

Mead: Is there anything else which seems memorable about the very early days of CNPS?

Burr: Well, of course we had public meetings once we got organized. The first one, I think I told you, was in October 1965 in Mulford Hall on [the U. C.] campus. They were usually pretty well attended, anywhere from thirty to sixty people. The plant sale was the main public event.

At some point, I don't remember just when, the Oakland Museum and the Native Plant Society got around to setting up shows of wildflowers--they do this in May every year. It's a combined affair, and native plant people collect the plants that are shown, and they identify them and talk to people about their horticultural uses. This wasn't right in the beginning, but it was sometime later. It's an important activity.

Mead: Can you describe how you felt being a member of CNPS?

Burr: Oh, it was wonderful! We did everything under the sun. We met people who were very, very interested in the entire ecological system long before there was any talk about an ecological movement. In the early days we had a lot of field trips up and down and around the state.

We had field trips in the desert and to Anza Borrego way down in the south. We had Thanksgiving dinners up in Ferndale, and we had trips up into Humboldt County. We had many field trips up into the foothills and in the Sierra. It was a very active group. Most all the chapters now have field trips all over the place. Every chapter is an ongoing resource for information about areas where plants might become endangered.

Mead: What role do you play in CNPS now?

Burr: I am a Fellow of CNPS. Doc was, too. The only role that I play actively now is that I always go to the December board meetings and heckle the board about this



Burr: and that. They always say it's like having an encyclopedia because I remember so many things, when something was said and so forth.

Mead: From the very beginning, I think you mentioned, Doc was a member of the board and you attended all the board meetings at that time. You mentioned you had official positions in the society?

Burr: I was Chapter Affairs Chairman, and I was Membership Chairman for a number of years. A friend, Susan Frugé, and I also indexed the CNPS Newsletter for about ten years. During this same period, every two years I would do a two-year index for the Fremontia which is our main publication. I was very active until they went to a computer system in Sacramento and moved the offices there. When the society became too large, Alice Howard couldn't do the recording and be corresponding secretary. Doc became Recording Secretary for many years. When he died they set up a fund, the Doc Burr Graduate Research Fund. ==

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Mead: You were just talking about some funds going into a graduate research fund.

Burr: The Doc Burr Graduate Research Fund was set up at the time he died in 1983. The Native Plant Society put two thousand dollars into the fund originally, and then for first two years I put in a thousand dollars each year. Monies that came in Doc's memory to the society also went into that fund. It's now around nineteen thousand dollars. There's two other funds, one is a G. Ledyard Stebbins fund for someone working on plant genetics.

Mead: These are scholarships?

Burr: That's right, people apply for them. There's a committee that reviews the grants. Last year we had about ten people who applied. I'm on that committee, and John Sawyer is Chairman. We decide on who should



Burr: receive the grants and how much we can afford to pay. We have only a certain amount of money we can allocate every year out of these funds.

Every year the funds are growing, so more interest is available. Now, because interest rates have gone down, there is not quite so much money available as there was earlier. This is a nice committee to be on, and I still do that. It gives me a great deal of satisfaction.





PART IV. JOYCE'S REFLECTIONS ON OTHER PERSONAL  
ACTIVITIES

Huckleberry Trail and the Citizens of Urban Wilderness  
Areas

Mead: At this point I'd like you to talk a little bit about you personally--what kinds of activities you've been involved in outside CNPS. Are you still a member of the Park District Budget Committee?

Burr: Yes, I'm still an honorary member of the Budget Committee. I always go to the budget meetings, and usually they let me open the meetings because I've gone for so many years.

Mead: Also, you mentioned something about Huckleberry Trail earlier on. Would you talk more about that?

Burr: The Park District was always going to do something about Huckleberry Trail.

Mead: Where is Huckleberry Trail?

Burr: It's in the Oakland hills--if you go along Skyline Boulevard--there's that wonderful anticline and syncline where the rocks fold--if you go past that a very short distance, that's where the trail is. There's a little parking place, and the trail starts there. It is a short trail, about a mile, but it has marvelous remnants of the chaparral of this whole area. It has been used by many botanical classes. The earliest date we heard of it being used was 1916. It's a fantastic place.

We were told all along by the Park District that no funds were ever set aside for Huckleberry, but they had been. I had the proof in my hand of a proposed budget of eighty two thousand dollars.

Mead: Do you remember what year this was?



Burr: Okay, I think it was some time around 1966 when the Park District, for Huckleberry Trail land acquisition had set aside some eighty to ninety thousand dollars. At one of the first meetings I went to, the general manager said that no commitment had ever been made. But I had a copy of the allocation. So after the meeting, I didn't want to call him a liar at the meeting, I went up to the Chairman of the Board, Fred Blumberg, and said, "I would like to show you the commitment you made," and I showed him this document.

He was shocked! He said, "Well, I always said you had the best files in the district." In fact, Mott had written a letter in 1965 or 1966 saying that they were going to get with it in July or August--but they never did a damn thing.

Now members of the Regional Parks Association had tried to get the Park District interested in that area since about 1952. Various meetings had come and gone, and they got nowhere with this. So nothing happened and nothing happened, and we finally got into the act. By the time we went to the final board meeting when we won, we had set up an organization called Citizens for Urban Wilderness Areas [CUWA], and we had Glenn Seaborg for our chairman.

We had gotten people from Laney College, Merritt College, the Sierra Club, from the Regional Parks Association, the Junior League, the Natural Areas Coordinating Council, from the Contra Costa Shoreline Park, the California Native Plant Society, West Contra Costa Conservation League, the Berkeley Garden Club, Mills College, Herb Society of America, the California Botanical Society, and other organizations.

We had an organizational meeting in 1972 at the Reeve's house, Marian and Roger Reeve. So people from all the groups I listed were in the group. We got on the agenda of the Park District Board Meeting and went. Now Mae Arbogast was there and presented at this meeting the plan for Chabot again--I think she called it an arboretum this time. In any case, she presented the plan again, and the board voted it down.



Burr: At the beginning of the meeting, the Chairman, Fred Blumberg, had acknowledged Glenn's presence. He said it very nicely, "It's nice to have Dr. Seaborg here today." Fred and I were sort of friendly enemies. When it came to the time to discuss Huckleberry Trail, Fred Blumberg asked if there was a spokesman, and Glenn Seaborg drew himself up to his full height--and you know what a presence he has--and said he had enjoyed the trails in this park and trails all over the world, but Huckleberry Trail was a very unusual trail right at our fingertips.

He said he wasn't here today to speak for himself, he was here to speak for the Citizens of Urban Wilderness Areas consisting of the following organizations, and he read off thirty five organizations like the role of the saints. As Fred Blumberg heard this, his face got redder and redder (laughs)--he knew that he had lost. Then I spoke and various other people spoke afterwards supporting Glenn's position.

Earlier they had said they would give us a foot on each side of the trail--well, that's not viable, you have to have a larger trail. Now what set this whole thing off was that the guy who owns the property had gone down and bulldozed a swathe across the trail--and that's when everybody got just frantic and really got going.

After everybody had spoken, Lucretia Edwards got up. She is this charming woman, like a New England gentlewoman. She wears her hair up in a bun and has bangs--she's just adorable. She had something to present to the board.

Now when I was doing telephoning for Huckleberry Trail, I ran into one gal who lived above the trail, and she said she had a lot of huckleberries from the trail in her freezer. I asked if we could have them, and she said yes.

Burr: Susan Frugé went up and got them and made some little tarts. So Lucretia Edwards got up, and she had a little wicker basket--in it were these little tarts. She presented huckleberry tarts from Huckleberry Trail to each member of the board (laughs). ##

##



Mead: So you succeeded.

Burr: Absolutely. They voted to go ahead and buy a lot of it. It's a botanic reserve essentially. It's now much enlarged completely. I didn't always win my battles, none of us did--but that was one we all won hands down. And then, of course, somewhere along the line, some idiot from the Park District with a bulldozer went in and started widening the trail, and of course we screamed bloody murder about that. It ended very satisfactorily.

Mead: Does CUWA still exist? What kinds of activities are they involved in?

Burr: Yes, we do exist. We have a couple of meetings a year, and Roger Reeve is the secretary for it. Glenn Seaborg's name is still on the list of members. CUWA still concerns itself with lots of things that come up. We are dealing primarily with the parks and the urban wilderness areas very close in--it's an unusual situation to have this much housing, then open area, then more housing. There was something about Briones Park or something in the Oakland hills. We usually meet at Sylvia McLaughlin's--you must have heard her name. She's one of the founders of Save the Bay, and she's wonderful.

#### Citizens Task Force

Burr: By the way, there was a Citizens Task Force at one time with the Park District, and I was on that. This was to set up a master plan--park outlay, things that were going to be in the parks, buying land--it was a broad, broad plan. Glenn Seaborg was on the committee, and I knew a lot of the people who were in this group. I was on the Planning and Management Guideline Committee.

Mead: Was the committee manned by citizens interested in planning for the parks?





Burr: Citizens were appointed by the District to this committee. Joseph Bort was the chairman. Morris Udall was hired to come in and be in charge of the project-- it was an important project.

#### Merry-Go-Round in Tilden Park

Burr: Did I tell you about the merry-go-round in Tilden Park? That was another fight we had with the Park District, and we won that! They were going to sell the merry-go-round. I got up and told them at a meeting that this was the only time in the Park District's life when they were being asked to protect something that was worth something much more individually than any other thing they could possibly buy. Dick Trudeau wanted them to buy a plastic merry-go-round--but the original one is a fantastic one, one of the best this side of the Mississippi. We all worked like hell to save it, and we saved it. So we did win some battles from time to time.

#### Libraries for the Richmond School District

Burr: Another thing that I did which was interesting, and again I don't have a date--the PTA in Kensington called to ask if I would work with them to help set up a good library in the Kensington school. I said, "Is this going to be for all the schools in Richmond?" The PTA said no, just Kensington. I said I was sorry, but I couldn't do that. Well, some years later a call went out to get some help for schools in so-called target areas (the disadvantaged neighborhoods), and Nystrom, Peres, Cortes, Pullman, Woods and Martin Luther King schools were in this area. I have a list of the people we got to work on that, and we worked for three years.

I put in probably thirty hours a week during the school year for almost three years--it was a huge project. It was running quite a long time, and now it isn't any



Burr: more. When we went into Nystrom School we were horrified. The National Education Association had provided a list of books for schools, and the government paid for them.

When we got to Nystrom School, the principal had locked the books in a closet because he thought the children couldn't keep the books clean. For ten years those books had been sitting there. It's hard to believe how people treated people in this part of the world. And it's not only the education of the kids, it's the education of the parents as well. I had wonderful, dedicated mothers who came in and tried to help out. Almost none of them knew the alphabet well enough to file.

One of the gals that I liked very much happened to know the alphabet. I was working on some cards, and I asked her to make a pile of authors and a pile of titles and I'd help her when I got through with another job. I watched her, and finally I went over and said I could help her now, and she said, "Oh, no, you don't have to help me, just tell me what an author is and what a title is and I'll be able to do it."

#### California Natural Areas Coordinating Council

Burr: Then there's the California Natural Areas Coordinating Council. This is something that G. Ledyard Stebbins got me involved in in 1969. He and John Olmsted had been to a Sierra Club conference, and they talked a lot about "what should be saved." But nobody knew what should be saved--there was no rule of thumb to know what is worth spending a lot of time saving and what isn't. Now this was rather early on in specific ecologic things. Ledyard called me up and wanted me to set up a meeting. He wanted to call us Save California's Biotic Communities. I said I would call the meeting, and I have a register of some of the people who came. This started in September 1969.

Mead: What was the meeting set up to determine?



Burr: We wanted to find out if we could set up an organization which could actually do this. So there were people from all over the place--the National Parks Service, Audubon Society, the Redwood Association who gave us one hundred dollars and said they'd never give us another penny (laughs), the Oakland Museum, and of course CNPS. In any case, we had this meeting out on a lawn in Oakland at the old Snow Museum.

We decided that this was certainly an important idea, that we should have some way of knowing, statewide, which things would be worth preserving and putting money in. Sometimes there's no way of stopping a development, and it's not worth the fight, and people don't if a piece of property is valuable or not--someone may be selling you a bill of goods. The group said, yes, it was a very good idea and we ought to do it.

We needed a secretary, a treasurer, a general manager and a board with a chairman. So there was a lot of organizational stuff that we did. The treasurer was going to be me, and Ledyard was going to head it until they could get someone else to do that. In the meantime I went to a luncheon that a friend was giving for her potential sister-in-law, a woman from Washington, D.C., who was coming to California. She was Executive Secretary in Washington for Oregon Senators Richard and Maurine Neuberger, senators with a strong ecological background, a good guy.

I knew what she had been doing, and I told her what we were setting up, and I asked her if she'd like to be secretary--she said she'd love it. The name of the group eventually became the California Natural Areas Coordinating Council, and there were people from all over the state--Mildred Mathias from UCLA, and other people from organizations. We were not dealing with individuals, we went through various organizations.

Mead: Is this the organization in which you helped to organize a large index or inventory?



Burr: Yes, it was a sixteen-volume index, now in the data base in Sacramento. In the beginning, CNPS put in a thousand dollars and collected various monies for it. Giles Mead, who at that time was head of the Los Angeles County Natural History Museum, became our chairman. We hired a young man, Leslie Hood, to be the Executive Secretary. We had several organizational meetings, both down in Los Angeles and up here. Little by little we got various grants, and we eventually did put this index out.

Mead: What is this an index of?

Burr: About fifteen hundred natural areas in the state, each one with a description. That was an important thing, and I was treasurer of that for twenty years. It was finally closed down because we had done our job.

Mead: It sounds like you have been active in many kinds of organizations over the years.

Burr: I must say that I was very lucky to have a husband who was willing to go along with all my nonsense. Of course he was active in the Native Plant Society--that became one of his great interests. He also encouraged me on my painting--I've had exhibits in various places.

[Riffling through another pile of papers]: What else is here--let's see. When George Murphy was Senator, a good Republican senator, and I am a Democrat, I wrote him a letter about rat control--a little old lady with tennis shoes. I had written a letter saying I was so unhappy that we weren't able to feed the birds in a nice suburb across the Bay from San Francisco because of the rats, and I thought it was a shame we weren't putting enough money into rat control.

"Dear Mrs. Burr, this will acknowledge your letter concerning the need for financial assistance for rat control in El Cerrito. I brought your views to the attention of the Public Health Service and enclose a copy of a self-explanatory reply from that agency."





Burr: "Your interest in writing me is appreciated, and I will be glad to keep your letter in mind when appropriations for the P.H.S. are considered by the Senate," and he did!

### Bridge Canyon Dam and Lady Bird Johnson

Oh! Did I tell you about getting into the act on trying to save the Colorado River from another dam? Do you know the book called Time and the River Flowing<sup>16</sup>? It is so beautiful. Anyway, another dam was going to be built and destroy some more of the Colorado River.

What I did was write to Lady Bird Johnson and told her that this book would speak to her of my concern about this. I took small passages and put them on different pages and stuck them in the book because I didn't want to ruin the book. At that time my friend, Will Siri, was Chairman of the Sierra Club. I went through this with him to be sure that he thought I had hit the right things.

I got a letter from the White House saying, "Mrs. Johnson asked me to thank you for your long and thoughtful letter and your strong supportive efforts underway to preserve and enhance the natural beauty..." and so forth. Mrs. had Johnson loved the book, "Your concern over current proposals for installing further dams along the Colorado River is very understandable to Mrs. Johnson. Many times she has expressed the hope that forthright consideration be given to alternate means of meeting the water and power needs of the thirsty Southwest," and so forth. "As you know, the matter is in the hands of the Congress at the present time." By the way, we won on that.

Have you heard of Toro Weap in the Grand Canyon? I had written, "I wish you might visit Toro Weap some day. Two years ago I had the unparalleled experience of

<sup>16</sup>Grand Canyon: Time and the River Flowing. Francois Leydet, ed. David Brower (Sierra Club Books, 1964, San Francisco).



Burr: lying prone on the ledge of Toro Weap and gazing down three thousand feet of red wall and rock to a vivid green oasis at the edge of a surging ribbon of river.

"If the Bridge Canyon Dam is built, I shall weep that my grandchildren will forever be denied this tremendous uplifting experience. The dam would flood many feet above this lovely oasis, and the sheer joy of this wonder would be distinguished forever. Perhaps I should say I lay prone because I was afraid to stand upright at the edge of that frighteningly magnificent canyon. I had asked a ranger at the North Rim about Toro Weap, and he, too, had confessed that he always lay flat to look over the edge." Anyway, I personalized this thing, and I sent it all to her.

Then, I don't remember when this was, but when they opened Highway One below Monterey as a scenic highway, I was invited to the opening by Governor Pat Brown "to the dedication of the first official Scenic Highway. Honored guest and speaker, Mrs. Lyndon Johnson." So my husband and I went.

I was about from here to you [indicates about four feet], that close to her, so I walked up a little closer and said, "Mrs. Johnson, I hesitate to bother you, but I wonder if you remember the book Time and the River Flowing that I sent to you." She said, "Oh, you sent me that! I read that every night, I pick it up before I go to sleep and read different sections in that beautiful, beautiful book." (Laughs) Isn't that exciting?

#### Other Personal Activities

Burr: Since we've lived here I've been active in a great many things. I did art shows for the El Cerrito Library for eight years. I was on the Safety Commission for eight years. I fought tooth and toenail to get the Orientation Center for the School for the Blind here. We finally lost, but what we had done here had actually paid off in the long run. The Orientation Center is now in the Albany, right near the plaza.



Burr: Then BART was going to take all the station agents out of most of the stations, and BART was not set up to run without station agents. There are too many flaws in the system. Someone in the blind community got in touch with me and told me about it. So a bunch of us got into the act. I did a lot of research, I'm a great researcher, and we finally won. They put the agents back into the stations. So I did a lot of things in between fighting the Park District.

Mead: Would you describe how you became involved in these things?

Burr: Sometimes it was reading things in the news, but sometimes, like the BART station agents, it was someone who called me and told me about what was going on. I started talking to some of the people at the Berkeley station, and I said, "We want to get some people together to talk this thing over." There was a man there, Tim Kraus, who also lived in El Cerrito, and he called me that evening. We became very good friends. He's sort of like a son to me and my husband.

We got in touch with the Center for Independent Living, and they sent several representatives. We also got some people from the blind community. We decided that this was a fight worth fighting. Tim and I got petitions signed, and we got a committee going, and we finally won at a BART meeting. I said that I hoped this would never come up again because I had a whole chest of papers devoted to this, and I hated to this much space to it. The general manager, Keith Bernard, said he would be glad to put what I had in their archives, and I said thank you, I will keep it, and I still have all the petitions and so forth.

Now I'm also involved with the RSVP. This is a federal thing through VISTA. I don't take any money for it, but they keep track of the hours I put in for public service.

Mead: What do the letters RSVP stand for?



Burr: The Retired Seniors Volunteer Program. It's set up in such a way that if people need to be paid for mileage for their driving, there is a fund for that, but I don't ask for this. I've done this for quite a few years now. This is a senior activity, and I've enjoyed this very much.

#### Gallery Association of the El Cerrito Library

Burr: For quite a long time, there was a Gallery Association of the El Cerrito Library, and for eight years I did art shows for the gallery. People came in and put up their shows.

Mead: What kind of art work do you do?

Burr: [Points to several paintings in the room]: That's mine, the one over the desk is mine, that's mine. I've done lots and lots of drawings. I never did etchings. I did a lot of line drawings--that scorpion [points to a drawing in the room] is an example. I did many, many drawings of native plants, and I sold a lot of those over the years.

Mead: Did you ever have shows of your own at the library?

Burr: Yes, after I wasn't in charge. Now there's an El Cerrito Art Association that I'm a member of, and I've had shows there. One time the Native Plant Society and the Gallery Association cooperated in a show at the library. From time to time we had special shows.

Mead: It sounds as if you have been very, very active over the years! I'm really stunned by the many things you've done and the many interests you have.

You also have wonderful memories and material on the early CNPS months.

Burr: I've really enjoyed these things. I've enjoyed this interview--it's been wonderful having you come. It's great to be able to talk about what I've done all my life.





## COLLATERAL DOCUMENTS



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March 12, 1964

Mr. Wm. Penn Mott  
Director, East Bay  
Regional Parks Districts  
11500 Skyline Boulevard  
Oakland, California

Dear Mr. Mott:

I have been extremely interested in the proposal made by Mr. Wieslander for the establishment within the East Bay Regional Park System of a botanical area in which communities of native plants will be represented. I believe that this is an excellent objective and I hope very much that it can be attained because the area will be of tremendous educational value. I visualize it being utilized as a familiarization area by a number of classes from the University and I am sure that many colleges and schools will find it similarly useful. It will be a great help to the public appreciation of our wildlands if the structure of the communities can be demonstrated in this way.

However, I do not believe that this reduces in any way the need for a collection of specimen plants such as is currently available in the Botanical Garden in Tilden Park. The Botanical Garden serves a rather different need; demonstrating the horticultural potentialities of native plants as well as providing opportunities for taxonomic instruction.

I should like to suggest that, even when the new botanical area is developed, the Botanic Garden should not be destroyed. Every specimen tree which can be preserved would be valuable. In many cases the trees in the Garden are the only ones in the Bay Area, having been established only after repeated attempts through the great horticultural skill of Mr. Roof.

Especially now that there is real hope that Contra Costa County will come into the Regional Parks System, it is very important to keep such an educational garden which is at the Contra Costa end of the Parks' distribution.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

H. B. Baker  
Professor of Botany and  
Director of the Botanical Garden

HGB:r

cc Mr. Wieslander  
Mr. Roof  
Mrs. Burr ✓  
Mrs. Kerr





copy for Mrs. Burr

Professor H. G. Baker  
 Department of Botany  
 University of California  
 Berkeley 4, California

Dear Professor Baker:

Thank you for your letter of March 12th.

As you know there is a committee studying the question of the Botanic Garden in Tilden Regional Park. It is my understanding that their tentative thoughts are to build a new Botanic Garden on some 300 acres in Grass Valley Regional Park. The present Botanic Garden will be used to stock the new garden which will be much more complete. When the new garden is ready it will be open for the public to use and enjoy.

We have no intention of destroying the present Botanic Garden but will continue to use it as a place to observe those unique specimens that cannot be moved. For example, I am sure the Sierra section will remain as a point of interest and beauty in Tilden Park. Obviously, however, we will not be maintaining two botanic gardens. Our financial resources will not permit this and it seems to me that if a new garden is developed it will have all of the interest of the present garden plus the opportunity for a greater collection of material. Also it will have the added advantage that it can be planned for proper use and maintenance as well as expansion. It is in the latter fields that the present garden is deficient and there seems to be no way to adequately correct the situation.

Sincerely yours,

  
 William Penn Mott, Jr.  
 General Manager

March 17, 1964



## CONTRA COSTA GARDEN COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT OF AIMS AND PURPOSES

The Contra Costa Garden Committee was formed early in June of 1964 to assure that the Regional Parks Botanic Garden be retained as a botanic garden, completed, and expanded at its present location in Tilden Park. One of the finest native plant gardens in the state, it is located on the Wildcat Canyon Road adjacent to the large lawn to the southeast of the Brazilian Room.

On June 2, 1964 Contra Costa citizens voted to join the East Bay Regional Parks District and to assess themselves 10¢ per \$100 of assessed valuation for five years and for 5¢ per \$100 after that. These tax funds are to be used to buy lands and to develop areas for recreational purposes.

One of the finest things which Contra Costa "purchased" by this vote is the Botanic Garden in Tilden Park, already in Contra Costa County and a great source of recreation and education.

This beautiful and useful garden, under development for twenty-four years, is planted exclusively in California native plants, arranged according to their geographical distribution within the state. In approximately 16 acres a visitor can not



only enjoy the beauty of the garden but can identify plants from all ~~agras~~<sup>areas</sup> of California--from the Ccoast Redwood areas to the Channel Islands, from the Sierra ~~and the Valley~~ to the Mojave--he can even find plants which ordinarily grow at over 10,000 or on the floor of the desert.

An informative and delightfully written 150-page GUIDE, keyed to the stakes in the garden, identifies and comments on more than 500 specimens. Available at nominal cost, it greatly enhances the value of the Garden to the casual visitor, the householder wishing to identify and learn about plants he might use, the serious student.

It appears now that there is great danger of losing the present garden in Tilden Park. Plans are being considered for a substitute development in Grass Valley Park, far to the southeast. This area, conceived of primarily as a botanic research development, would be devoted to large plants communities in an area of 200 to 400 acres, difficult of access to most of our county, involving many, many miles of paths, great expense of development and maintenance, and of little use to the average citizen.

Mr. Mott, General Manager of the EBRPD, has said, orally and in writing, that if this large Grass Valley Park garden were es-



tablished, it would be the end of the present garden as a botanic  
 garden--indeed, <sup>as the usually mention</sup> only the Sierran meadow area (less than half of  
 the present garden) <sup>as says it</sup> would be maintained and <sup>then</sup> only as ~~part~~ of the  
 park scene."

Since March two groups in Berkeley have been actively protesting  
 this move, the Citizens Committee for Tilden Park and The Friends  
 of the Regional Park Botanic Garden. Now that Contra Costa is in the  
 Regional Park District, our committee has been formed to add its  
 voice to the growing clamor to save this fine exisiting garden in  
 Tilden Park.

We want to join with the other groups and hundreds of individuel  
 citizens in the Berkeley-Oakland area in opposing any move to  
 abandon <sup>as a botanic garden</sup> ~~the~~ present Garden, in whole or in part. Like them, we  
 want the Garden to remain in its present location, to grow east-ward  
 along Wildcat Canyon Road, and to maintain its present character  
 as a source of knowledge, a sanctuary and an inspiration.

Attached to this short explanation of our Committee's purpose  
 is a list of 15 reasons, anyone of which might be ~~XXXX~~ used as  
 a point of departure for letters to be written. This list was  
 presented to the Board of the Regional Parks District by The Friends





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the citizens' advisory group  
of the RPBG<sub>A</sub> which has rejected the grandios<sup>e</sup> proposal for a research  
development in Grass Valley Park.

We hope you will write letters expressing concern for the Tilden  
Park Garden and urge your friends to do so, too. We are also attaching  
a list of the names and address<sup>es</sup> of the people to whom letters should  
be sent. We also list the names of those you should call or write  
for more information or for petitions to circulate to show the Board  
of the District how much interest there is in the Garden.



This is a copy of the original  
 report made by the  
 Board of Directors of the  
 Regional Parks in 1959.

# SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR SUPPORTING THE TILDEN PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

1. The present garden is of inestimable scientific value. It received the unanimous commendation of the Board of Directors of the Regional Parks in 1959. It is well and widely known.
2. The present garden is well established. Growing conditions and possibilities are well understood after 24 years' experience.
3. The present garden represents an investment of ~~well over a million dollars~~ <sup>many hundreds of thousands of dollars</sup> and of 24 years' growing time. Such an investment is not lightly to be discarded.
4. The present site is capable of all the expansion which is sensible.
5. The present garden is situated in a high-use area where it is convenient for scientific and educational study, and where it attracts casual visitation as well. A county road makes it easily accessible to Contra Costa County residents, too.
6. The basic layout of the garden into geographical areas is excellent and is widely admired by professionals.
7. An admirable guide to the garden is available for the use of students and others seriously interested in native plant horticulture. Students make extensive use of the garden.
8. The present site is protected from wind. It has been protected from damage by the creek that runs through it.
9. Natives are not usually easy to grow. They can rarely be successfully left to fend for themselves, either when lost in huge acreages or as relics of abandoned botanic gardens.
10. Rare plants are well established in Tilden. Their establishment in Grass Valley is problematic. They are hard to grow.
11. An extremely competent horticulturist has been in the garden throughout its history. His contributions toward the preservation of unusual species are well known. Some plants in the garden do not exist elsewhere. Careful record-keeping has contributed invaluable information about native plants.
12. It has been said repeatedly that two gardens cannot be maintained. We are unalterably opposed to a second garden if our present one must suffer in any way. Obviously it would if a second garden were established.
13. Enormous size, as contemplated in Grass Valley, is a disadvantage for several reasons. Plant care becomes much more difficult. Costs mount (the area would have to be fenced to keep deer out, also). Visitors are discouraged at the prospect of miles of walking.
14. Grass Valley is not conveniently located for easy visitation or for use by local educational facilities.
15. Rampant erosion is even now a drawback to the Grass Valley site. Disturbing existing plant cover to make way for new planting beds and paths would only increase the problem.



## COPY OF THE LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

Sent to all members of the Regional Park Board of Directors and to the General Manager:

2239 Channing Way  
Berkeley, California  
June 2, 1964

Dr. Robert G. Sproul, President  
Board of Directors, East Bay Regional Park District  
31 Tamalpais Road  
Berkeley, California

Dear Dr. Sproul:

Enclosed are tentative plans both for the present Botanic Garden at Tilden Park and for the proposed extension.

These plans are the result of collaboration among the Citizens for Tilden Park, the Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden, and the soon-to-be-organized Contra Costa group (as yet unnamed).

Also, a single copy of the map of the proposed extension is enclosed for the use of the Regional Parks Board.

May we respectfully suggest that you read over these plans thoroughly, as the information in them will greatly help you in understanding what you see when you go over the site with our guides.

Respectfully yours,

(Signed)

Rino Bacigalupi, Chairman  
Friends of the Regional Parks  
Botanic Garden

Encl. 2



## TENTATIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PRESENT TILDEN PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

### INTRODUCTION

The functioning of a botanic garden, especially one for California native plants, is a highly specialized and complex undertaking. Adequate provision must be made for a competent staff and for training personnel in the special techniques required. Ordinary gardening practices can quickly result in disaster.

It should be clearly recognized that the Botanic Garden is only secondarily a landscape venture. A botanic garden in the Regional Park District is primarily for the enjoyment and education of the public. It is complementary to a university botanic garden, which is primarily for scientific study and research.

Improving and completing the present Botanic Garden in Tilden Park should be considered in several important areas:

- I. Personnel and labor
- II. Equipment and facilities
- III. Engineering
- IV. Structures

All of these need to be considered in planning the repair of the remaining ravages of the near-typhoon of October, 1962, in completing the site development as originally envisioned, in maintaining the present plant collection at its best, and in increasing the usefulness of the Garden.

### I. PERSONNEL AND LABOR

Ideally the staff of the Garden should consist of 1) the Garden Maintenance branch, 2) the Collecting and Propagating branch, and 3) the Office branch. Training of employees should be provided. Necessity for a closer approach to this ideal staff will increase with expansion of the Garden.

The minimum staff at present should consist of

1. A Director (We are following standard practice in botanic gardens in designating the chief officer as Director.)--a horticulturist with wide knowledge of California native plants and their culture.
2. An Assistant Director--also a horticulturist with wide knowledge of California native plants and their culture.
3. Garden Foreman--a person with extensive training in California native plant culture and propagation.
4. Two or more Gardeners, permanently attached to the Botanic Garden and being trained in cultural requirements of California natives grown out of their natural habitat. (These persons cannot be interchangeable with other Park gardeners because this type of work is very different from ordinary landscape gardening. Many native plants can be killed just by watering at the wrong time.)
5. Permanent Secretary-Clerk--Such a person is needed to provide guide-books and other materials, to keep records, to handle correspondence, to process Park District forms, to provide secretarial assistance in research and preparation of publications, to arrange bookings for Garden tours, to maintain rotating display of a seasonal nature for visitor orientation and enlightenment, to assist in the preparation of interpretive materials, and to perform other routine office tasks.
6. Extra Labor--available from time to time for specific short-term jobs





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With a staff of this size the research aspects of the Garden could be greatly expanded. The Director of the Garden would again be free to collect in the field. He could expand research and publications, making use of the vast quantities of data accumulated over many years of coping with natives horticulturally and in the field. He could train personnel in the specific needs of California native plant propagation and culture. He could disseminate information to visitors and correspondents.

As a matter of record, the Director of the Garden has never had a staff adequate for carrying out the functions necessary for most effective operation of a botanic garden. Expanded facilities and staff could attract additional funds from agencies other than the Regional Park District.

The matter of issuing publications from the Garden should be investigated. A vast quantity of horticultural data is in the records which have been kept for many years. Such publications, aimed at the interested home gardener, would bring much prestige to the East Bay Regional Park District.

Salaries should certainly be commensurate with salaries in other botanic garden

## II. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. Electricity. This is needed for electrical equipment and for providing proper lighting in the buildings. Flood-lighting during the Christmas season would help control attempted tree-cutting. Flood-lighting should be limited to the Christmas season so as not to interfere with natural night predators vital to the control of rodents.

2. Drinking Fountains. Several are needed. There are none in the Garden now. Only one tap carries drinking water.

3. Tools. The Garden should have its own power mower, chain saw, and similar heavy equipment. Storage space is available in the tool shed. Equipment needs should be determined by the Garden staff and provided promptly.

4. Truck. A half-ton pickup truck is needed for transportation of supplies, equipment, and special soils and for removal of trimmings, brush, diseased plants, and other discarded material.

5. Communication System. There is need for a telephone for outgoing calls or an intercom system to be used to get help in emergencies such as accidents, pipeline damages, and fire. When secretarial help is available, a telephone for incoming calls should be provided. With the present limited staff, however, such a telephone would be only a nuisance.

6. Service Yard. A small service yard within the present fenced area is needed for the parking of Garden vehicles and cars of employees.

7. Visitor Parking. The present space should be improved and enlarged. The Contra Costa County Engineer's Office should be consulted over the redesign and improvement of the parking area on the County road. While this work is being done, the drainage down the road and the slope above the Garden and the Wildcat Canyon Road could be improved. More parking should be provided near the west entrance to the Garden just outside the fence. Portions of the lawn area below the Brazilian



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Room should be reserved for future parking, as also should the Camp Oaks area if it should be abandoned as a picnic area.

8. Benches. In each geographic area of the Garden there should be at least one bench, preferably of rustic design suitable to the nature of the Garden.

9. Plant Information. The publication "Guide to the Plant Species of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden" is extremely valuable to anyone who has a serious purpose in visiting the Garden. The Guide makes possible a self-guided tour more comprehensive in scope than could be possible with mere labeling of the plants. This Guide is a publication of which the Park District can be justifiably proud. It should continue to be available, and work on a supplement should be started promptly to reflect changes and additions in the Garden. The present Guide covers only two-thirds of the material now growing in the Garden.

Labels should be installed again. Vandalism, which once caused their abandonment, probably has been alleviated by the addition of the deer fence. Labels cannot serve the broad purpose of a Guide. But for the casual visitor they would be extremely useful and they would serve for immediate identification of doubtful specific plants during hurried visits of a serious student. A machine to produce permanent labels should be provided to the Garden staff.

A mimeographed list of plants of special interest, a blooming succession list, and the like, keyed to the present stake color code, are other materials which would fill needs. Seasonal mimeographed pamphlets, giving information about plants currently of special interest, could be made available. Token fees could be charged for these materials to minimize litter problems...what costs money is less likely to be discarded.

A display of sprays from plants of seasonal interest could be maintained, properly identified for visitors.

A master rotary file of plants growing in the Garden could be made available for use by visitors or by the staff.

(Several of these suggestions would be possible only with an increased staff and a visitor reception center.)

10. Rest Room Facilities. Centrally located facilities are badly needed.

11. Entrance and Directional Signs. The recently acquired painted entrance sign, temporary in character, should be replaced by an attractive permanent sign in keeping with other Park signs. Directional signs should be replaced at Park entrances and at strategic intersections within the Park.

12. Library. A reference library should be started for the use of both staff and visitors.

13. Fence. This is very necessary to provide protection from deer. Esthetic objections could be reduced by signs, "Deer Fence", placed at intervals along the fence.



### III. ENGINEERING

1. Plant Beds. A California native grown outside its particular ecological niche must receive horticultural compensation. The planning and engineering of its artificial niche can be directed only by a native plant specialist and generally only as the specimen becomes available for planting. Ideally, the Director would choose the niche and direct the preparation of the plant bed by his own staff. Such preparation cannot be on a definite predetermined schedule, but must depend on the need of a particular specimen as perceived by the Director.

One of the unique cultural techniques of the Tilden Garden is the use of a special type of rock quarried in Tilden near the present Botanic Garden. This is used to make fungus-free plant beds. Other special soils have been imported from time to time. Usually it is necessary to hold this material in place during the rainy season with a plant-bed wall constructed of rock held by cement. Most such beds have not washed out during the heaviest rains. This rock-cement construction also provides fast drainage necessary for many species.

It would be well to note that the Tilden source of the special rock so vital in growing many natives has been mentioned as a site for a club house in connection with another golf course. As this material is essential to the Garden, it is absolutely necessary that this quarry be reserved for the exclusive use of the Botanic Garden.

It would be wise to restate the present directive on construction in order to enable the Director and his assistants to set new plant beds where needed, to finish the repair of storm damage, and to finish all paths except for a few which could be constructed by Park crews.

Planning in advance where each plant bed should be placed and working from a rigid preconceived pattern of paths and beds is not generally feasible in this type of Botanic Garden. There is an inherent difference between a specimen garden of California natives arranged by large ecological regions and either the usual garden of exotic plants arranged in a landscape pattern or a botanic garden arranged by plant families. Planting of a garden such as the Tilden Garden is largely dependent upon the availability of material collected on field trips.

Autonomy is vital in the operation of any botanic garden. More autonomy is needed in the effective running of this Botanic Garden. Communication delays between the Garden staff and the Management staff are not uncommon at present. Many situations require immediate appropriate action, and it would be preferable if the Director were given authority to take appropriate action when these situations arise.

The over-all plan of the Botanic Garden was worked out initially with landscape consultation and can be followed to its completion without major change. The present Garden is a remarkable landscape achievement, and many trained visitors find it difficult to realize that strict geographic unity has been adhered to with few exceptions. These include a few species native to Tilden Park and a handful of rare or extinct varieties too valuable to risk moving.

2. Paths. In a garden which must provide all-weather access, hard surface paths are valuable for several reasons. Most of our flora blooms within the rainy season when a dirt path is muddy and possibly unsafe. A dirt path on a sloping sur-



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face tends to "gully" during heavy rains. As they were intended to do, hard surface paths quickly route water to the central stream through the Garden, by which storm water is carried very successfully. (See pictures taken during the storm of October, 1962.)

As suggested by the Park management, a variety of surfaces is desirable to avoid monotony; such variety already exists in the Garden. Uncompleted paths should be finished. A master plan for paths is in preparation; it will provide both wide paths usable by the pickup truck and footpaths. Concrete paths might be softened in appearance in some manner. Traffic flow might be facilitated if main routes were surfaced exclusively in the same material.

3. Creek Bed and Walls. Massive erosion by heavy winter rains has usually been avoided by the concrete and rock walls within the Garden along the creek bed. The storm of October, 1962, did destroy some of the plant beds and walls. Logs and debris brought down the watershed from above the Garden were deposited as a dam within the main creek in the Garden. The continuing drainage problem in the parking area at the south entrance contributed to the damage. These conditions are both correctable.

Some rerouting of the drainage pattern from the east slopes above the Garden will be necessary.

The bed of the creek needs to be patched in several areas. This could be done with a suitable material. Some of the steep walls above the main creek wall need stabilization. New rock walls look stark, but they weather nicely. Such walls not only will eventually be covered by plant growth which will blend into the park scene but will do a permanent and economical job of thwarting erosion. Without the type of construction now in use, storms would have damaged the present Garden severely. The most important factor to remember about the present treatment of the creek bed is that the construction is very necessary and that it has worked. Pictures taken during the October, 1962, flood give evidence of the effectiveness of the construction.

The advisability of a system of check dams along the creek above the Garden should be investigated.

4. The Main Bridge over Wildcat Creek. This should be finished with a complete continuous surface at each approach and along its entire width. The railings should be finished in a suitable manner and extended along the entire length of the bridge. When plant beds, destroyed in floods, are replaced near the approaches and plantings grow once again to their proper size, the bridge will blend into the landscape properly. A small island which was below the bridge might be rebuilt and planted as it was before the October, 1962, flood.

#### IV. STRUCTURES

1. Staff Buildings and Structures. Additional lath area, an office building, etc., should be the concern of the present Garden staff, and their recommendations should be the basis for any action by the District.

2. Juniper Lodge. Juniper Lodge, in the center of the Garden, was built to





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commemorate the California Centennial of 1949 and should be preserved and completed. Brass plaques set into stone in the front section of the Lodge bear the names of 27 Gold Rush towns, and the fireplace on the west wall has set into it copper plates commemorating the Forty-niners and the California Centennial.

This building is set tightly down into the structure of the Garden, is unobtrusive with its Alpine Garden on the east and the plantings at the front, and should be finished attractively with completed rock walls and a better roof. The area is approachable by trucks and equipment from the east and north, and construction can be done from these sides without disturbing plantings.

When completed, this building should provide weather shelter and rest rooms.

3. The Garden Shelter. This is the unfinished stone structure at the "top" of the Garden. Recently this building shell has been cleaned out, plantings have grown up to the south and east of it, and the patio has been partially leveled. The structure is greatly improved in appearance and is now used by many visitors as a place from which to view the Garden. If this building had been finished in the past, it would have had a great deal of use by the public, because a building is needed here as the center of activity for the more casual visitor to the Garden and as a shelter from weather during the rainy season. If this structure is not completed as a finished building, but left simply as a wind-break and rain shelter, an inexpensive light-weight roof could be provided.

Finished, with its rock walls and a roof, it would fit the site extremely well, with plantings near it. The views of the Garden from this vantage point are dramatic and stimulating, and are sought by many painters and photographers. The area must be protected by a structure of some sort to preclude serious wash-outs in heavy rains. Publications could be available here, such as the Guide, reprints of the various articles which have arisen from research conducted by the Garden staff, and pamphlets about plants of current special interest. A large map of the Garden should be here to provide orientation for Garden visitors. There should be a fireplace to provide winter warmth. Tables and benches should be provided, both within the building and in the patio.

This building would, therefore, serve as office, weather shelter, and interpretive center, and should house the library. A watchman's room should be included for use during the Christmas season.

4. Paint Shop. There should be a separate paint shop. It should have a ventilation fan. Dust complicates painting chores in buildings used to store tools and supplies, where this work is currently done.

5. Residence. A residence for the Garden Director should be provided at Mineral Spring in conjunction with the expansion of the Garden.

Architecture: A general statement on architecture has a place here. We do not feel that examples of striking contemporary architecture are suitable for inclusion in this Garden. Buildings constructed of native stone, like those already begun, are in keeping with the idea of the Garden as a refuge from spreading civilization, and are also functional in controlling erosion. The plants are the important feature of the Garden. Buildings should be unobtrusive.



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## CONCLUSION

The suggestions included here give some indication of the scope of use to which this Garden is put. Botanists, landscape gardeners, native plant specialists, arboretum directors, teachers, students, amateur gardeners, botanic garden directors, foresters, bird lovers, casual visitors, travelers from all over the world, visiting park-men, photographers, painters, conservationists, mothers and fathers enjoying a relaxed walk, and their children--all of these enjoy and use this Garden.

These suggestions will help to make it easier to accommodate the many, many visitors. Through its efforts to improve the Garden, the Regional Park District can show these visitors that it understands what a true gem it has in its midst in this unusual bit of public domain.



# TENTATIVE SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PROPOSED EXTENSION OF TILDEN PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

Reserving the area northwest of the present Botanic Garden at Tilden to "Mineral Springs" would afford room for normal extension of the Garden. In requesting this, our objective would be to retain the present compact, comprehensive specimen garden which illustrates the flora of the entire state within a moderate sized area. That treatment urgently deserves every assistance which can further the adequate fulfillment of its highly important role. In the new adjoining area, we could then go on to display a number of special, for the most part, ecological groupings specifically chosen to enrich the appreciation of our unique flora as it occurs en masse in the wild. The approach in this extension would be akin to that of the proposed plant community garden at Grass Valley, but the Tilden extension would not only have the advantage of being part of a single, already well-established unit but in being of practicable, manageable scope horticulturally and financially. The entire Tilden garden, original and extended, would probably be in the neighborhood of half the size of the famous Kew Gardens. Kew Gardens (141 acres) contains two kinds of arboreta, glasshouses, four museums, sundry other buildings, and plants from all over the world. As we are not attempting arboreta, particularly since the Knowland Arboretum is available, we are confining our flora to a single state of one country, and do not have need of glasshouses and museums, this appears to be sufficient space for the adequate development of this project.

For the appropriate framing and protection of the Tilden Garden we urge the retention in its natural state of: 1- the rather open westerly facing slope above the county road, 2- any part of the densely wooded easterly facing slope between the creek and the Brazilian building lawn which is not actually included in the garden, and 3- the lake trail (save for attention along the trail to poison oak and overgrowth). Disturbance of the westerly facing slope as originally contemplated for a golf course would create serious erosion problems for both the county road and the garden. We would have liked to have utilized some of the easterly facing slope but understand the oak fungus there were better undisturbed.

Comment should be made on the diversity of habitat available in the extension. There is almost every conceivable exposure and degree of steepness represented here, for topographically it might be described as a parallel series of four somewhat broken east-west ridges and their intervening valleys superimposed on a southwest facing slope which extends down from the county road to Lake Anza and, close to the original garden to and across the stream which feeds it. The fact that the slope is southwest facing insures sun to whatever extent is wanted and the general downward trend of the basic slope, plus the sides of the ridges, gives drainage throughout most of the area, almost regardless of soil. Certain rocky sections can provide for special features. One of these includes, at present, two highly picturesque natural formations, the exposed rib ending, in a large boulder at the lake, and above the rib an amazingly beautiful clump of very large, old bay trees set amongst broken rocks and partially enclosing a boulder-filled cavern. The lush creek growth, both tree and shrub, at the southwest corner of the area, together with a natural shaded embayment gives evidence of how beautiful a moist shade complex can be in this situation.

As the map shows, there is excellent access to both ends of the combined original and new garden area from the county road, whether one approaches from Berkeley, El Cerrito or Orinda. Also placed as it is with regard to Lake Anza, the Brazilian room, Camp Oaks and the golf course, the Garden is situated precisely where



it will be discovered readily and is even easily available for some members of a party while others may be enjoying different facilities. Parking would be available at Mineral Springs -- where it should be expanded somewhat -- as well as at the lower original garden entrance, and eventually, as needed, we would suggest that the lower part of the lawn west of the west side road skirting the present garden, also be converted to that purpose, to relieve any strain.

Insofar as we can see there are many advantages to the site of proposed extension and the disadvantages are of such nature as can be overcome or avoided. For example, scattered Eucalyptus plantings, and perhaps a single stand of small pines which appears to serve no particular purpose, should be cleared as needed. The Eucalyptus would not seem to be the problem it might, considering the local demand for pulpwood; it has been demonstrated in the original garden that plantings can be made where Eucalyptus has been, despite cut stumps.

A tentative proposal might include the following plant communities:

A small Redwood Grove -

The present Redwood Section in the main Garden is a more inclusive subdivision covering the coastal counties north of San Francisco Bay which form a belt throughout which Redwood occurs in disjunct groves. A new area is needed to tell the story of the Sequoia itself and its associated species, including the very fine shade undergrowth of ferns, vine maple, red huckleberries, oxalis, trillium, and clintonia. To the edges, where more light strikes, might be masses of azalea and rhododendron.

A Closed Cone Pine Forest

Emphasizing several of our notable pines and cypresses. The cones of the most extreme member, Pinus contorta, are known to stay closed on the tree as long as 15-25 years, yet open immediately after fire and produce seedlings which themselves can have cones in 5 - 10 years. This behavior insured the preservation of the species long before the white man came and is no less important now that he has multiplied the number of forest fires.

A Chaparral Slope

One of the most widespread associations in the hot, dry, periodically burned over lower reaches of our ranges is the California version of xerophytic thicket known as chaparral. Characteristically it is highly difficult to penetrate. Such a formation lends itself to observation from the edges, leaving the center a well-protected sanctuary for birds and other wild life. Many of the chaparral shrubs are berry plants and would positively attract birds.

A Spring Wildflower demonstration

Four distinct approaches could be utilized to tell the story of our colorful California Spring. 1 - A carpeting of intermingling drifts of the well-loved flowers found in foothill and valley, including some of our more common bulbs as well, 2 - A California poppy slope--our state floral symbol, 3-- A small spill of Downingia in a temporarily wet depression or "vernal pool," 4 -- A moist lowland meadow (Camassia, perhaps Calochortus uniflorus), and 5 - A desert section. The five would not need to be contiguous, and indeed the first could in itself be interrupted in pattern. The relatively virgin condition of the Tilden Area with regard to introduced weeds and the good drainage from slope should facilitate this





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demonstration. Incidentally, the poppy slope will not only be a major attraction to the public in its flaming blooming season but as fruiting comes on a large number of birds will appear--a boon to bird watchers.

Because of the ever-increasing agriculture in the Central Valley, the "vernal pool" habitat, which is almost unique to California, is in danger of extinction. Nevertheless, the vernal pool flora is one of the most showy and biologically instructive and its message must be passed on to successive generations of Californians.

#### A Seaside Area

The entire western boundary of California is ocean. At one time ocean water even extended into what is now the Great Valley. A sandy area, a saline area, a sea bluff, and a San Bruno Mountain preserve might represent the highly interesting floral communities of the seaside. The Tilden Garden could show the San Bruno flora to best advantage because James Roof is the leading authority on this subject. A word should be added in regard to San Bruno Mountain. This low mountain at the edge of Daly City overlooks the ocean, San Francisco, and the far reaches of the Bay. Held in private hands, until now the original flora of San Francisco had opportunity to persist here. Now even this last stronghold which includes many unexpected species and forms, some unique, is yielding to housing and road building.

#### Serpentine

California hills and mountains, exclusive of the granitic core of the Sierras, present one of the most varied and jumbled assortment of rocks and minerals to be found anywhere. Because the chemical and physical nature of the disintegrating rocks frequently is associated with the kind of flora, and because one of the types of rock which is easy to spot and appealing to the eye is the "slickentite" form of serpentine, this would be an outstanding one to represent. In addition, the serpentine outcrops of California harbor some of our rarest and most interesting native plants. These will not grow in competition with coarser species on normal soils and can only be displayed on a continuing basis on serpentine.

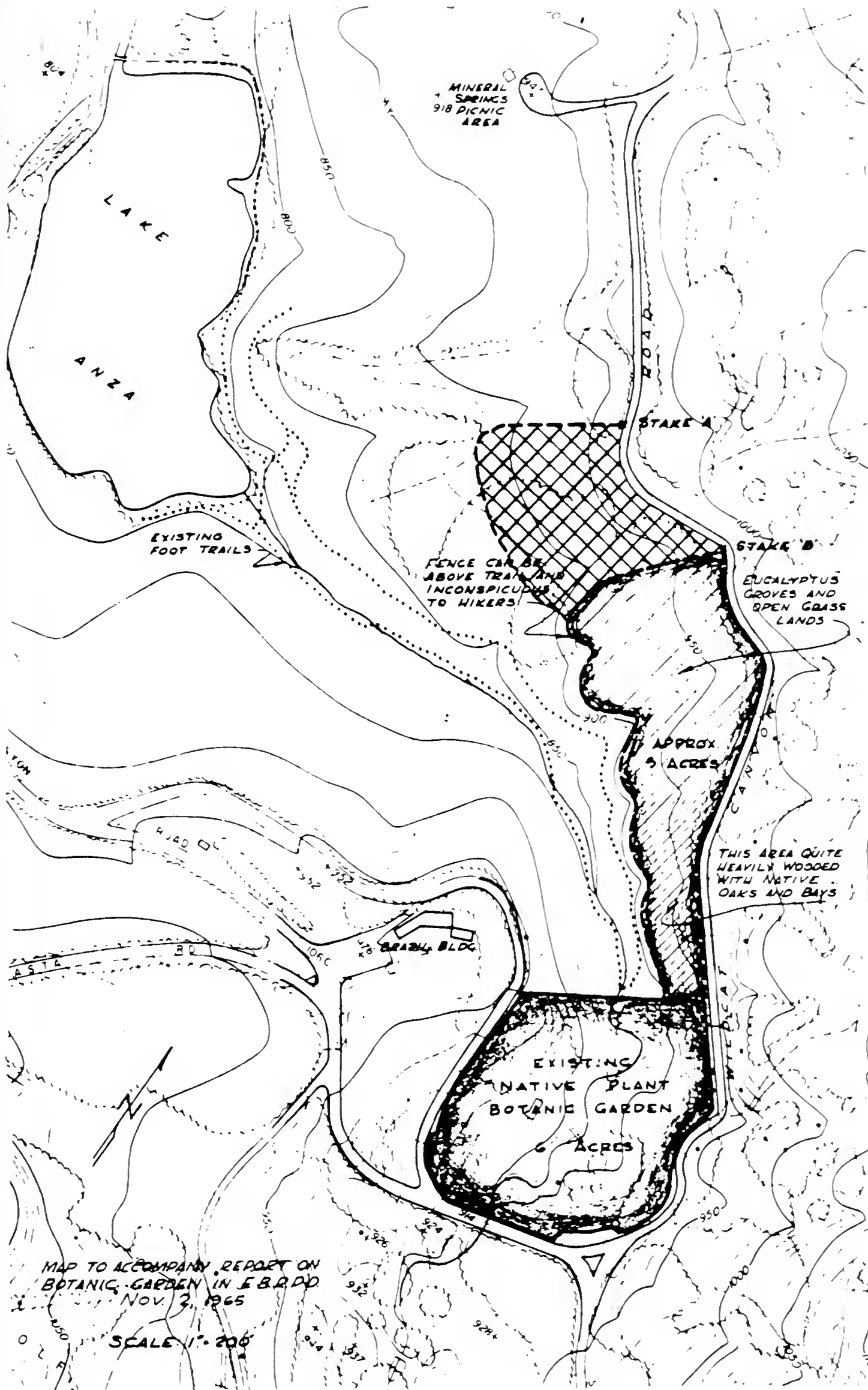
Shale slopes and other talus slopes might be created if the opportunity of a supply of rock should present itself.

#### A Fragrance Garden

For those with and without sight, to be planned with regard to especially easy access. This would consist of a limited number of natives with distinctive odor and texture selected to reward exploration throughout the season. Not all of these plants need be sweet smelling. It is part of the function of a botanical garden to be educational and blind persons have a right to this as much as their sighted colleagues. Some plants attract pollinating insects by odors which are not sweet. This is one aspect of pollination biology which the sightless person can appreciate

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In order to facilitate the proper placement of these plant communities and to use the available space to best advantage, the Friends suggest that the services of a consulting landscape architect thoroughly versed in the problems of natives be secured to work with the Regional Park authorities and our planning committee. The Friends would definitely like to assist in the selection of such a consultant and have several persons in mind.







## CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

July 1964

1. The Tilden Botanic Garden began in 1940 when the U.S. Forest Service gave to the EBRPD an excellent collection of container-grown California native plants. Steady progress was made up to 1962 (except during the war years) in developing the botanic garden and adding to the material grown there.
2. This progress was recognized in December 1958 when the EBRPD Board of Directors sent to the Director of the Botanic Garden, James Roof, a letter of commendation. It said: "(We) appreciate the work and devotion you have put into making the Botanic Garden California's outstanding display of native plants."
3. A new management came into the EBRPD in July 1962. An order issued July 5, 1962, and still in effect, forbids any construction work in the garden pending a plan for the garden's future. (A landscape plan for the garden, drawn up about 1950 by a landscape architect, Webber, has been used in the garden development.) As plant beds must be constructed when new plants are added, this order essentially stopped planting and the collection of new material. Other orders disrupting the normal operating procedures of the garden were issued, and experienced garden help was discharged and not replaced. For a period Mr. Roof had to maintain the 20-acre garden alone.
4. To help in this situation, the Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden was formed in the winter of 1962. Anyone interested in the garden can join this group. It has been recognized by the EBRPD as the citizens' advisory group for the garden. Its ranks include many persons professionally interested in native plants, as well as many laymen who appreciate the garden for various reasons. The interest shown by this group has helped to maintain the garden, although it is operating at a very minimal level.
5. In March 1963 the Friends submitted a plan to the EBRPD General Manager calling for various improvements in the present garden. They were told that the plan was not ambitious enough and that a garden of the finest quality was needed. A criterion of at least 100 acres was mentioned as necessary to provide this finest quality. (This figure has since been raised to as much as 400 acres.) The Friends' planning committee restudied the situation and submitted another interim report on a large site in Grass Valley, under the belief that the Tilden garden would be maintained separately. The General Manager has since said repeatedly that two gardens could not be maintained and that Tilden would lose its status as a botanic garden if the Grass Valley area were developed.
6. The General Manager stated in December 1963 that the advice of the Friends would be acted upon in planning the future of the garden.
7. In May 1964, having considered reports both for Tilden and for Grass Valley, the Friends voted unanimous support of Tilden and moderate expansion into lands adjacent to the present garden. Plans, the result of collaboration with two other interested citizens' groups, were submitted to the EBRPD Board in late May, and the Board toured the garden with guides from the three groups in June.
8. Petitions requesting the preservation of the Tilden garden as a botanic garden and its expansion in the immediate area, signed by some 1500 people, were presented to the EBRPD Board in May. The decision of the EBRPD is pending.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP US?

Join the Friends by sending your dues to Treasurer  
Mary Brezee, 1299 Glen, Berkeley 8:

Annual	\$1.00	Sponsoring	\$25.00	Patron	\$200.00
Sustaining	\$5.00	Life	\$100.00	<u>THE GARDEN NEEDS YOU!</u>	



# Berkeley Daily Gazette

ESTABLISHED 1877

BERKELEY, CALIF., WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 1964

Part I—

## Botanic Gardens of Tilden Park Center of Heated Controversy

### Experts Differ on Proposal

*(This is the first of two articles regarding the current controversy over the proposed relocation of the Tilden Park Botanical Gardens.)*

By MARY ELLEN PERRY

One of the outstanding features of Tilden Park is the Regional Parks Native Plant Botanic Garden, located 10 minutes from downtown Berkeley, and currently the center of a fierce controversy.

More than 800 of California's 1,500 cultivated "native" plants—there are almost 5,500 species in all which have evolved in this state and nowhere else—are growing in the garden.

Some of these specimens are the only ones of their species left in existence. California's burgeoning freeways and tract home developments have destroyed forever their original habitats.





### THREE GROUPS

In the last two years, three local groups have formed to work for the improvement and expansion of the garden's six to eight acres now under "intensive" cultivation.

Nestled in Wildcat Creek Canyon, these acres are surrounded on the west by the Brazilian Room lawn, on the east by a county road and on the south by the Tilden golf course. To the north, beyond the part of the garden so well known to botanists around the world, the creek continues its winding way toward Lake Anza through the wooded canyon which could be put under "light cultivation" to expand its present garden to a total of 40-60 acres.

Today, these groups, composed of professional botanists, University of California professors, native plant growers, and plant lovers, believe they are fighting not only for the expansion and preservation of the garden but to save the garden itself from being abandoned by the Regional Park administration as a purely native plant collection.

But the Regional Park staff, headed by director William Penn Mott Jr., vehemently denies it has any intention of destroying the Botanic Garden and maintains the citizens are "misinformed" as to the district's plans.

The controversy germinated late last year when Mott asked a subcommittee of the oldest citizen's group, "The Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden," to study "long range" possibilities for enlarging and improving the Tilden garden.

### FORMED IN 1962

This request was in keeping with the goals of the friends group, formed in 1962 to aid in the preservation and development of the Tilden garden. In fact, the group had submitted a prelim-

inary report earlier last year outlining its recommendations.

Dr. Rino Bacigalupi, associate research botanist and curator of the Jepsun Herbarium at UC, a special research center devoted exclusively to native California plants, is chairman of the Friends; Dr. Herbert C. Baker, director of the UC Botanic Garden in Strawberry Canyon (which includes a native plant section), is vice-chairman, and Dr. Helen-Mar Beard, senior botanist at the UC Botanic Garden, is one of the active members of the 100-member group.

The subcommittee, called the planning committee, was composed of A. E. Weislander and Charles Kraebel, retired U.S. Forest Service members; Mrs. Mai Arbogast of the UC landscape department, and chairman Owen Pearce, editor of a horticultural publication.

After several meetings of the planning committee, late last year, some attended by Mott or Irwin Luckman, chief of the plans, design and construction department of the Park District, the committee in January of this year recommended to the Friends that a new botanic garden be built in Grass Valley Regional Park, one of the more southerly parks in the East Bay System.

At some point during this period, the planning committee minutes show that "an additional requirement to the original" long term objectives "was that the area (of the botanic garden) should be large enough with a minimum of 200 acres."

The committee's report listed the "reasons why the planning committee felt the Grass Valley site is the best possible one within the present Regional Parks District."

They include the following: The site has a large enough acreage and the possibilities for expan-

sion are excellent; the topography allows for greater possibilities of different plant communities than does the present garden; the contour of the land is varied enough to make growing different types of natives possible; the site is at the head of a natural drainage area making water readily available.

Further reasons for locating a new garden at Grass Valley, the committee said, included a greater range of soils, accessibility to the mainstream of traffic, and features of the topography the committee felt would be conducive to starting a garden there.

### DISADVANTAGE

The committee also said it felt the Tilden garden had the following disadvantages: It is too congested; too constricted for future development; the creek bottom and walls (which control Wildcat Creek as it flows through the grounds) would have to be rebuilt; the garden is located in Tilden's highest use area; the area will be used for more and more recreation in the future; the exposure to vandalism is great, and drainage problems would be created if a proposed golf course were built.

They also listed what they felt to be the "advantages of retention of the present botanic garden while a new garden is being developed," and said "the length of time during which the present

garden will serve as an interim garden must be determined after the future garden is well on its way toward development."

But the Friends group as a whole disagreed with the possibility of the Tilden Garden being "phased out," and withdrew their support when "it became clear that the scale of the new project threatened the existence of the present Tilden Garden," the support for which the group had formed in the first place.

(Tomorrow: Two other citizens' groups join The Friends.)



# Berkeley Daily Gaz

ESTABLISHED 1877

BERKELEY, CALIF., THURSDAY, AUGUST 6, 1964

## Citizens Mobilize to Protect Botanic Garden in Tilden Park

*(This is the last of two articles regarding the current controversy over the proposed relocation of the Tilden Park Botanical Garden.)*

By MARY ELLEN PERRY

After the Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden decided to oppose a proposal from one of its sub-committees to build a new, 200 to 400-acre botanic garden in Grass Valley Regional Park, Dr. Herbert Baker, head of the University of California Botanic Garden, and vice chairman of the Friends, inquired and got this reply from William Penn Mott Jr., director of the Regional Park District:

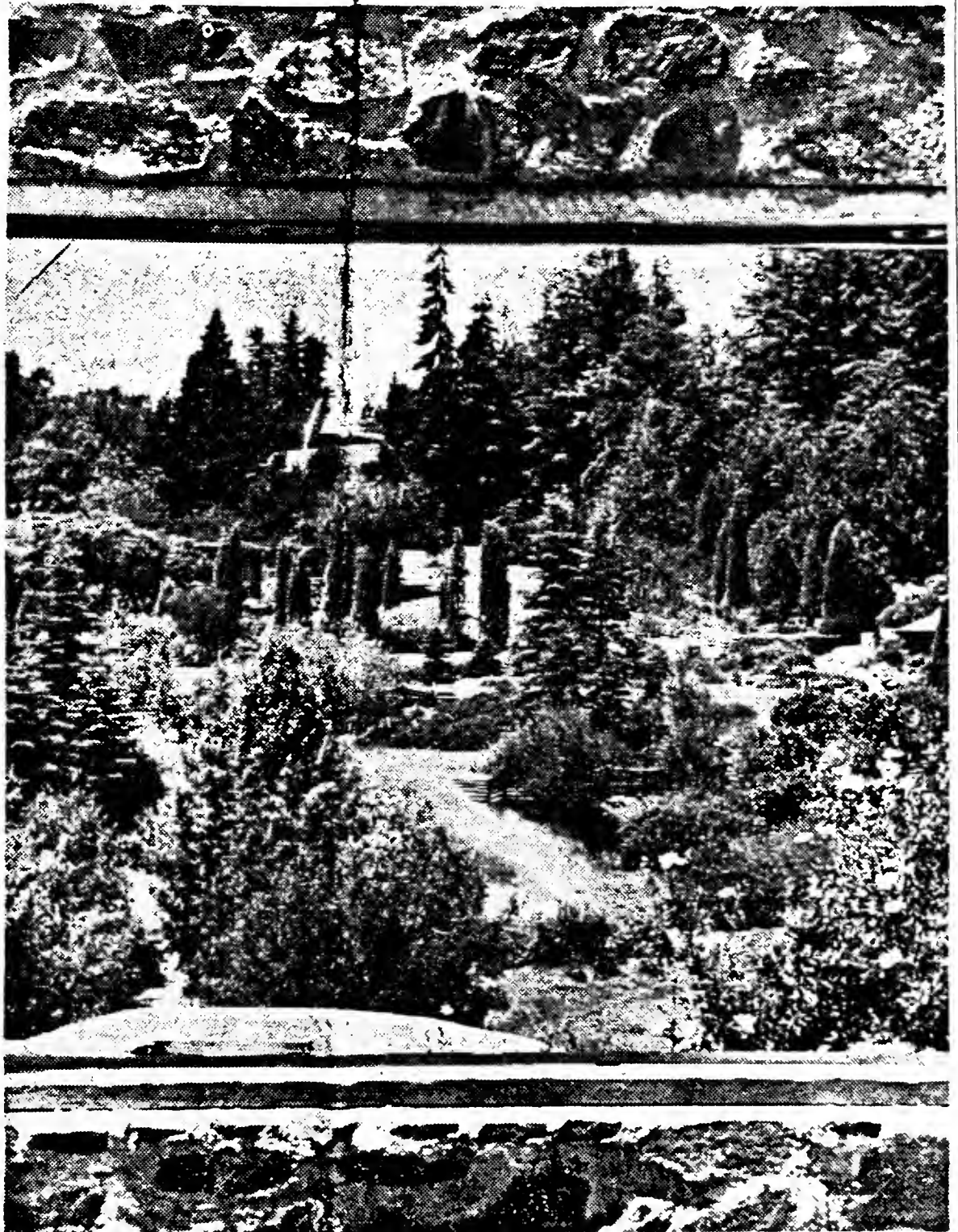
"As you know, there is a committee studying the question of the Botanic Garden in Tilden Regional Park. It is my understanding that their tentative thoughts are to build a new Botanic Garden on some 300 acres in Grass Valley Regional Park. The present garden will be used to stock the new garden which will be much more complete. We have no intention of destroying the present Botanic Garden but will continue to use it as a place to observe those unique specimens that cannot be moved. Obviously, however, we will not be maintaining two botanic gardens..."

Another letter from Mott to a Berkeley resident read in part: "... If it should be determined that the California Native Plant Botanic Garden should be in a new location, it would not be our plan to destroy the present garden. It would be maintained as part of the park scene, although not as a botanic garden..."

### TWO GROUPS

In the meantime, two other groups had formed specifically out of apprehension for the fate of the Tilden Garden.

"The Citizens Committee for Tilden Park" formed and circu-



Here is a panoramic view of the Regional Parks Native Plant Botanic Garden in Tilden Park as seen from inside the walls of one of the unfinished buildings on the grounds of the six-eight acre garden. In the distance the

lawn and flagpole mark the Brazilian Room and in the fore and background some of the 800 native California plant specimens growing in the Garden, currently the object of a spirited controversy in Berkeley.



lated a petition which was signed by more than 1,500 persons living in the Park District, protesting any end of the Garden.

Mrs. Marion Copley, a Berkeley resident and iris grower, is chairman; Dr. Leo H. Brewer, UC professor of chemistry and cultivator of what is considered the largest private native plant garden in the state, is co-chairman; Mrs. August Fruge, noted botanic editor, is secretary, and Mrs. Luther Smithson, conservationist, is treasurer.

At the May meeting of the Board of Directors, Mrs. Copley presented the petitions and told the Board, in part: "We are a cultural community, and we do not want Tilden Park turned over exclusively to entertainment and recreation activities, but wish to have also something of cultural value. I have talked to many people about this new expansion (of the Tilden Garden) and have met with almost universal enthusiasm."

Prof. Brewer also maintains that if the Grass Valley proposal is approved Tilden Garden will be jeopardized. "No one will run a bulldozer through it," he comments, "but lack of maintenance would be the same thing."

#### EL CERRITANS

Mrs. Kelly Falconer, chairman pro tem, and Mrs. Helen Burr, telephone chairman, both live in El Cerrito and head the third group, the "Contra Costa Garden Committee," which is also circulating petitions demanding the present garden to be preserved "because many of the plants are irreplaceable, the area is easily accessible to our large metropolitan and urban community and is centrally located with respect to the population density of the district."

Mrs. Burr maintains that the district's campaign literature, distributed for last June 2's primary election when Contra Costa County voted to annex itself to the park district, no word of a Botanic Garden move was mentioned.

Mentioned under Botanic Garden in the literature, however, were "greenhouse and service area, garden house, library, restrooms, etc., miscellaneous other structures, and site development," as proposed developments in Tilden Park.

Last month, all three citizens' groups got together and submitted a combined report to the District Board of Directors, headed by President Emeritus of the University of California Robert Gordon Sproul, spelling out their recommendations for the Tilden Garden.

A summary of the reasons for the groups' support of the present garden includes the following: that the present site is cap-

able of all "sensible expansion; the plants in the garden are of "inestimable scientific value;" the garden is in a high use area where it is convenient for scientific and educational study as well as casual visitation; that the lay out of the Garden into geographical areas of the state of California is widely admired by professional botanists; that natives are extremely hard to grow and rarely survive if left to fend for themselves; that the large acreage envisioned for the Grass Valley site would greatly increase the maintenance costs; and would discourage visitors faced with the prospect of walking over thousands of miles of trails; and that "rampant erosion" at the site is "even now a drawback."

The group members also believe the site of the Tilden Garden, rather than being a liability, is one of its major assets.

#### FOG BELT

It lies just over the ridge of the Berkeley Hills in Contra Costa County but within the "fog belt." It gets, therefore, periodic days of fog and periodic days of



From left are James Roof, director of the Tilden Park Botanic Garden; Mrs. Donald Falconer of El Cerrito (in front), chairman pro tem of the "Contra Costa Garden Committee"; Mrs. Marion Copley of Berkeley, chairman of the "Citizens for Tilden Park," and Dr. Rimo Bacigalupi, curator of the Jepson Herbarium at the University of California and chairman of the "Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden." They are examining a foxtail pine tree, a rarity in this area, normally found in the High Sierra. It is one of 800 species growing in the native plant garden located just over the ridge of the Berkeley Hills in Tilden Park.

## okes Can't le Mate

Men, are still left to grow cynical and soured old maids, just because they smoke."

Destiny hinges on very small things.

Grace could easily have been married a year ago and maybe be mother of a cute baby by now.

But her cigarette habit checkmated that fascinating career.

Yet Grace probably doesn't know why the IBM machine can't find her a suitable boy friend.

Maybe you teen-age girls and college coeds think I am joking when I tell you that one of the greatest causes for bachelor girls and soured spinsters is tobacco, but that is true.

Although not all the men registered with the SMF expressly refuse girls who smoke, most of them do NOT want wives who use

tobacco.

In fact, among the first 10,000 men to register with the SMF, only one man actually asked for a girl who smoked!

He requested a wife who used liquor and cigarettes.

But he had an ulterior motive, for he was a high salaried executive who wanted the wife of a former big shot executive who could mix highballs and smoke and thus hobnob with the sophisticated social set from which he wished to recruit future business.

Girls, tobacco halitosis doesn't make your kisses attractive!

And when you exhale smoke through your nostrils, you look like a locomotive smokestack!

Smoking deprives a girl of the daintiness and thus the feminine allure that captivates the usual man who is wife-hunting.

## Ask Ann—



No  
As

Dear Ann Landers: Our 13-year old daughter, Natalie, told us she was going to the library for the afternoon to see an art exhibit. Instead we learned that she and a girl friend went to see a foreign movie which was billed for adults only.

Natalie is tall for her age and could pass for several years older. From the description given by a friend who saw her in the movie house Natalie painted herself up like a trollop, wore a wig and high-heeled shoes and got by the cashier.

When I confronted Natalie with the report she did not try to lie out of it. She said she was curious about the picture and thought would be fun to see if she could get in to see it. My husband feels we should deprive the girl of her allowance for six weeks. What do you say?—COPING

Dear Coping: I do not believe in depriving teen-agers of the allowances as punishment. I assume that the allowance is earned by performing some services for the house, and so long as the services are performed, the allowance should be paid.





strong summer sun, enabling it to adequately support plants from both the cool, foggy Northern California coasts and the state's hot, dry interior.

Its soils are supplemented by soil mixtures conducive to those plants not native to this area, according to Garden Director James Roof, who has spent 24 years developing the Garden since it was started in 1940 with a "superb" collection of "natives" gathered by the U.S. Forestry Service. The garden was built as a WPA (Works Progress Administration) project.

So, in one area, rare Sierra firs and evergreens stand not far from spiny, desert succulents; fluttery "quaking Aspens" are in silvery contrast to the more dense oaks, while the red, flakey trunks of the manzanitas and madrones duplicate the wild slopes of Mt. Tamalpais.

"If you study these plants in the Garden you will have no trouble recognizing them in the wild," Roof says, neatly summing up the purpose and value of the Garden.

The Garden is used by UC classes in botany and landscap-

ing, and by Diablo Valley and California State College at Hayward classes. Students sometimes take examinations there, pinching, sniffing, crushing and breaking off bits of leaves and berries as they identify the plants in their natural growth patterns.

Today, the Garden is operating on a status quo budget, and has on its grounds two unfinished buildings and unfinished concrete walkways which are also designed to serve as watersheds. The expansion proposals await the decision of the Park District Board of Directors; who are, in turn, awaiting a report from three of the original members of the Friends planning committee on the feasibility of the Grass Valley site. The fourth member, Owen Pearce, did not continue as a member of the planning committee, and the committee is no longer considered a part of the Friends group.

Whatever is the final decision of the Park Board of Directors, it is hopeful that decision may be influenced by a lively public dialogue during which the pros and cons of the issue are debated.

## Mighty Natalie Is King For Trouble

By ANN LANDERS

A more logical punishment would be no movies for six weeks.

Dear Ann Landers: Our 23-year-old daughter Annette was always the shy type. We never knew what was in her mind most of the time because she was so quiet.

Around Christmas she told us she was expecting a baby. My husband and I couldn't believe it. The father was a boy named Harvey who is also shy and quiet. They had gone out together for three months, had but five dates.

We gave them a hurried wedding—very small and nobody suspected a thing. Harvey took a job 2,500 miles from here which was fine with us. The baby was born in May. We didn't tell anyone about the baby, not even Harvey's folks. Annette wanted it that way. Last night Annette phoned to say she is sick of lying and wants to come home in a couple of weeks—

exactly as old as she ought to be so drop that ridiculous notion.

Tell Annette to come home and don't feel that you must apologize or explain to friends. Anyone who would refer to the baby's "advanced age" is no friend.

IT'S EASY

Dear Ann Landers: Maybe I can help Hattie who is dreading the arrival of 300 guests (she has a small home) to a party honoring her parents on their 50th wedding anniversary. Here is the solution, figured mathematically.

Invite 60 for 2 p.m., 60 for 3 p.m., 60 for 4 p.m., 60 for 7 p.m., and 60 for 8 p.m. Approximately 10 per cent of the invited guests will be unable to attend. At peak time, there will be no more than 75 people in the house. Between 6:30 and 7 p.m. the family can take off their shoes and catch their breath.

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Berk. Gazette, Dec 16, 1968

## Botanic Garden Dispute

A special meeting will be held by the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Parks District to consider proposals from citizens' groups relative to the future of the Tilden Parks Native Plant Botanic Garden.

A board meeting yesterday at the district office, 11500 Skyline Blvd., Oakland, erupted into a lively discussion of future plans for the Tilden garden, when several Berkeley persons voiced disagreement with a proposal to develop a 400-acre Botanic Garden in Grass Valley Regional Park.

A planning committee of botanic experts reported to the board its proposal to maintain the Tilden Garden and develop the Grass Valley Garden and gave the following recommendations:

Facilities at the Tilden Garden should be improved and upgraded including a study of buildings, design, plant care, visitors' center and parking area, and an educational program. No expansion of the garden should be undertaken, the committee said.

The committee was composed of A. E. Weislander and Charles Kraebel, retired U.S. Forest Service employees; Mrs. Mai Arbogast, University of California landscape department member; and Owen Pearce, editor of horticulture publications.

Their report was challenged by Dr. Leo H. Brewer, UC professor of chemistry who grows his own native plant garden and who contended statements in the report were not true. Mrs. Marion Copley, chairman of the Citizens for Tilden Park, and Mrs. Joyce Burr, of the El Cerrito Garden Committee, said their groups had opposing presentations on the future of the Tilden garden.

William Penn Mott Jr., general manager of the Parks District, said the parks staff would consider all proposals concerning the garden.

"This is the time for other committees to make their presentations," Mott said, "which could be studied by the staff and then discussed at an open meeting later."

yon Creek area for possible development into a park-like area.

### PROPOSAL

Mott's proposal was in keeping with a request from the Kensington Improvement Club which asked the district to buy the land to prevent urban development in the area.

He said the district could work with subdividers in Wildcat Canyon "who are willing to use cluster development of buildings with open space in between."

Mott envisioned an ultimate development of riding and hiking trails within a "beautiful green belt" which would stretch from Wildcat Canyon and Alvarado Park adjacent to Tilden Park's boundaries down the length of Wildcat Canyon Creek until it flows into San Pablo Bay.

Mott said the project is not budgeted, but that expenses would be worked out relative to negotiations with the cities involved.

In another item, Mott received the approval of the Board to ask Berkeley Assemblyman Don Mulford to introduce legislation in the State legislature giving the district permission to acquire 79.6 acres of State surplus land immediately behind the California School for the Blind.

He said the Berkeley City Council had given the district the go-ahead to get the land. He said the district might be able to acquire the land without charge through the State Lands Commission.

### UC EXPERT

Dr. Herbert Baker, chairman of the University of California Botanic Garden, said he admired the Grass Valley report but thought there were possibilities for expansion of the Tilden Garden; was not sure that native plants could be planted in the proposed Grass Valley park and thrive without constant care; felt there were slippage areas in Grass Valley and danger of deer; and said the likelihood of vandalism might be greater in the Grass Valley area.

Mrs. Copely presented petitions with 3,173 signatures of district residents she said were "protesting the removal of the Botanic Garden to another location."

After further discussion from members of the audience and Board members, the Board approved the scheduling of a special meeting, sometime early next spring, according to a district spokesman to consider proposals from groups who disagree with the Planning Committee's findings.

In other business, the Board approved a proposal by Mott that the district begin negotiations with the cities of Richmond and San Pablo to acquire property adjacent to the Wildcat Can-



## Concert Program Set

Local High School, will sing two numbers, "Sheep May Graze Safely" by Bach, and "Si, Mi Chiamano Mimi" from the opera "La Boheme" by Puccini.

William Weichert, a senior at Skyline High School of Oakland, will solo in Alexander Tchereninin's "Sonatina For Timpani and Orchestra," which will include four movements, Allegro maes-

toso, Animato, Andante delizioso, and Allegro marciale.

The ballet music by Khatchaturian will be waltz from "Masquerade," Lullaby from "Gayne" and Dance of the Rose Maidens from "Gayne."

Two other numbers on the program include Prelude to Acts I and III of Verdi's opera "La Traviata," and the special orchestration for "My Fair Lady."

Independent - Wed 17 March 1965

## 'Save the Garden' Group Forms Here

In a continuing local controversy over the condition of the Tilden Park Botanic Garden and the retention of its director, James Roof, a "Save the Garden" committee was formed this week.

The purpose of the committee, according to members of the Friends of the Botanic Garden, who include University of California professors and plants experts, is to "coordinate efforts of all groups in both Alameda and Contra Costa counties who are determined that the Tilden Park Botanic Garden must be saved and expanded toward Mineral Springs under the proven expert direction of James Roof, director of the Garden."

The committee will solicit support from garden clubs, citizens' groups, nature and botanic societies, teachers, Scout groups, conservation leagues, plant nurseries, and "anyone who has an investment in the Garden," spokesmen said today.

Persons at the meeting included Dr. Leo Brewer, UC chemistry professor and division head of the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory; UC professor of botany Dr. Watson M. Laetsch, Dr. Fred Tarp, Contra Costa college representative; Dr. Helen-Mar Beard, of the UC Botanic Garden, and Mrs. Horace Burr of the Contra Costa Garden Committee.

The group contends Roof is being dismissed from the post he has held for 25 years and that the Garden, which harbors many

species of rare plants native to California, will be allowed to deteriorate if Roof is removed.

William Penn Mott, Jr., general manager of the East Bay Regional Parks District, of which Tilden Park is one, has countered by saying the parks are run with a "team approach" and that Roof has not been willing to be part of the team.

Roof was given two weeks notice last week and has appealed the dismissal. He has the right to a hearing from Mott and Tilden Parks supervisor Parry Laird and to be accompanied by legal counsel.

Should Mott and Laird uphold the dismissal decision, Roof can request a hearing from the Park District board of directors.

"The 'Save the Garden' committee is being headed by Mrs. Horace Burr, 7817 Terrace Dr., El Cerrito.

Last night's meeting was chaired by Rimo Bacigalupi, head of the Jepsum Herbarium on the UC campus, a museum of native California plants.

### Ivory Coast Hums

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast—In the past five years the booming Ivory Coast's industrial output has increased 50 per cent. The nation's economy as a whole is growing at an annual rate of 10 per cent. The population increase is less than 2.5 per cent a year.



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## THE TILDEN PARK BOTANIC GARDEN CONTROVERSY

In December 1962 a group of botanic specialists became concerned about the fate of the Tilden Park Botanic Garden under the new management of the Regional Park District. This group held a series of meetings at which plans were discussed. Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr., the General Manager of the East Bay Regional Park District, was asked for help with some of these considerations and accepted this group as an advisory organization for the Tilden Park garden.

In March 1963 a plan drawn up by this group for the improvement of the Tilden Park Botanic Garden was presented to Mr. Mott to take to the EBRPD Board of Directors for consideration. The EBRPD Board later stated that it had never seen this report.

In the fall of 1963 Mr. Mott asked the advisory group to plan for an enlarged botanic garden of 100 or more acres. A subcommittee of the advisory organization volunteered to work on this plan for an enlargement of the Tilden Park garden. From the time of its first meeting, November 25, 1963, to the date of its first report to the parent organization, January 22, 1964, this subcommittee's interest changed. The subcommittee reported a plan for a greatly expanded garden outside of Tilden Park rather than a plan for the expansion of the Botanic Garden in Tilden Park.

This plan for a new, much larger garden was rejected by the board of the advisory group and, later, its membership also rejected this elaborate plan. Shortly after this rejection, three of the four members of the subcommittee resigned from the parent advisory organization. They set themselves up as an independent group to advance the cause of a larger garden. The parent organization, at first accepted by Mr. Mott as a Botanic Garden advisory committee, was repudiated by him after it turned in its report recommending expansion of the Tilden garden into the area between the existing Botanic Garden and Camp Mineral Springs (June 1964). The independent subcommittee's report was given to the EBRPD Board in December 1964. This report called for a 350 acre garden at the northern end of Grass Valley in Chabot Regional Park.

During the time of preparation of this splinter minority report, two other citizens' groups were developed to protect, improve, and expand the existing garden. All three groups opposed the Grass Valley proposal for many reasons including:

- 1) Mr. Mott had stated that the District would not maintain two botanic gardens.
- 2) The proposed garden in Grass Valley was far too large and would be too expensive to operate.
- 3) The area suggested for expansion in Tilden was eminently suited for the purpose.

One of the three groups has given the EBRPD Board of Directors over 3000 signatures to a petition asking that the Tilden Park garden be protected, improved, and expanded in Tilden.

As of now (April 1965) the EBRPD Board of Directors has taken no official step to accept the reports of any group. However, this Board in February 1965 appointed a 3-man committee to hold a hearing May 11 at 8 p.m. in the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park. At this meeting they are supposed to hear proposals for the expansion of the Tilden garden and review the plans for the nearly-400-acre proposal. This 3-man committee is to report its recommendations and conclusions to the whole Board at a later time.



Page Two

In March 1965 Mr. Roof, Director of the Tilden garden for 25 years, was fired. As a result of this action, members of the existing citizens' groups set up the Save the Garden Committee to coordinate the activities of all local groups concerned with saving and expanding the Tilden Park Botanic Garden and defending its Director, Mr. Roof. Chairman of this committee is Dr. Leo Brewer, Professor of Chemistry at the University of California. For additional information in your local area, please contact any of the following:

Mr. Clyde Robin, 4233 Heyer Ave., Castro Valley	581-3467
Mrs. Helen Ashuckian, 19 Blade Way, Walnut Creek	935-6293
Mrs. Alice Howard, 1556 Everett St., Alameda	522-0941
Mrs. Glenn Watters, 907 Clark Pl., El Cerrito	527-0312
Mr. Manfred Rosengarten, 1221 Oak, Martinez	
Mrs. Scott Fleming, 2750 Shasta Rd., Berkeley	848-3455

#### FACTS SURROUNDING THE DISMISSAL OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE TILDEN PARK BOTANIC GARDEN

In 1962 Mr. James Roof had been employed by the East Bay Regional Parks as Director of its Botanic Garden for 22 years. With a limited staff and limited funds, he had developed a famous garden illustrative of the main native plant components of 7 geographical divisions of California, and had written an excellent guide to the Garden, for which he had received the commendation of the EBRPD Board of Directors. The garden was widely used by the general public to learn about the flora of the state, and by schools and colleges all over the area as a classroom laboratory.

Shortly after the arrival of Mr. William Penn Mott, Jr., as General Manager of the Park District in July 1962, actions detrimental to the Garden began. The Assistant Director of the Garden, who had been there 17 years, was eliminated by a ruling of the General Manager. Instructions were issued which halted work in flood control, the building of raised plant beds, and the completion of the concrete-stone paths in the Garden. A general assumption was evidently made by the new management of the District that a botanic garden of this unique type could be operated like a landscaped garden of rugged ornamentals. This general policy has been followed since the summer of 1962.

In the spring of 1964 a new Park Superintendent was appointed. Intensified harrassment of the Garden staff followed: The truck was taken from the Garden even more frequently. Orders were issued that were either detrimental to the Garden (for example, removing the barbed wire which protected the Garden from deer), or impossible. Such an impossible request was the compilation of an inventory of all plants in the Garden as to place in the bed, size, condition, age, and botanical description, together with map and photographs. All this was to be completed in two winter months while the Director was to continue the regular Garden work with only two full-time helpers.

When this inventory was not completed at the end of the stipulated period, the Director of the Garden, who had received his 25-year gold-and-diamond pin in February, was dismissed March 2 by the management. At the present time the management says, "Mr. Roof is unwilling to be part of a team." It is doubtful whether any botanic garden director would find himself able to be part of a recreation-oriented team ignorant of the culture of California natives outside of their natural habitats.

To dismiss the man who created almost singlehandedly a botanic garden of California





Page Three

native plants which is unsurpassed would be a great tragedy for the thousands of people who each year visit the Garden. Mr. Roof has made grow in Tilden Park plants whose native habitats range from the High Sierra to the floor of Death Valley. He has grown from seed plants which many botanists said could never be grown in the Bay Area. His scientific achievement in the culture of California native plants is highly regarded both by botanic specialists and by enthusiastic laymen. His advice is sought by specialists from around the world.

To dismiss Mr. Roof's specialized type of garden because it does not conform with preconceived ideas of landscaping is to misunderstand what the Tilden Park Garden is. Like a true artist, Mr. Roof took his plant material and arranged it, not to form a landscaped garden, but to create jewel-like bits of scenery from every part of California.

To train a successor Mr. Roof would require perhaps 10 years. Because of this responsibility and because of his love for the Garden, he chose to ask for a hearing on his dismissal as provided for in the rules of the District. This hearing has not been held (April 1965).



# Oakland Tribune Thurs, 1 Apr 1965 Controversy Flares Over Fate of Botanic Gardens

## Chabot Project Revived

By GAIL RUSS

A thorn-patch of controversy has sprouted in the East Bay Regional Park District over the Botanic Garden at Tilden Park.

The 20-acre garden is second to none in its collection of native California plants, many of which now grow no place else in the state.

Seeds of dissension began germinating almost two years ago when a report emerged recommending a huge new botanical garden in Anthony Chabot Regional Park, then known as Grass Valley Regional Park.

The study said eventually the new project would supplant the garden in Tilden.

### MOTT PROPOSAL

William Penn Mott Jr., general manager of the park district, had suggested that the study be made by a subcommittee of the Friends of the Regional Parks Botanic Garden, a citizens' organization of eminent botanists, garden experts and knowledgeable hobbyists.

Mott and other district officials attended some planning sessions of the subcommittee.

The study, which took nine months to complete, also contained recommendations for the continued operation of the Tilden Park botanic garden on a reduced scale and the development of other natural beauty sites in the district.

### SOME DRAWBACKS

It held that there is not enough room to expand the Tilden garden, that it is too close to the hub of the park's recreational facilities and that the soil in Anthony Chabot Park is better for the cultivation of native plants.

The proposal was rejected by the full membership of Friends and the four subcommittee members resigned.

They were Charles Kraebl



**FIRED BOTANIC GARDEN CHIEF JAMES ROOF**

Seeds of dissension grow in regional parks

and A. E. Weislander, both retired from the U.S. Forest Service; Mrs. Mai Arbegast of the University of California Landscape Architecture Department, and Owen Pearce, editor of a horticulture magazine and group chairman.

After the plan was turned down by the full membership, the four ex-members determined to submit it to the park district board, anyway.

### ASK EXPANSION

But before they could present it, a combined committee of Tilden expansion backers submitted recommendations, proposing among other things that the garden be expanded to about 65 acres with detailed suggestions for its improvement.

The group was headed by Dr. Rimo Bacigalupi, research botanist and curator of the Jepson Herbarium at U.C.

The group's membership was

drawn from the Friends and two other organizations anxious to preserve the Tilden plant sanctuary—the Citizens Committee for Tilden Park and the Contra Costa Garden Committee.

The Citizens Committee, headed by Mrs. Marion Copley of Berkeley as chairman, gathered 3,200 signatures on a petition urging the district to maintain the garden and expand it in its present location.

### FULL HEARING

The park board set 8 p.m. next May 11 in the Brazilian Room for a full hearing on the proposals.

Then on March 2 a new blow to the Tilden groups' hopes was struck with the dismissal of James Roof, veteran director of the botanic garden and its guiding genius for the past 25 years.

Roof immediately appealed the firing and demanded a

## Petition Supports Tilden

hearing before Mott. No hearing date has been set.

Roof continues on the job but the dismissal order instantly set the Tilden botanic garden backers in a new flurry of activity.

An emergency coordinating committee drawn from membership of all three citizens groups was formed under the title and war cry of "Save the Garden."

### NAMED CHAIRMAN

Dr. Leo Brewer, U.C. Chemistry professor and division head of the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory who maintains the largest private native plant garden in the state, was named chairman. He also was co-chairman of the Citizens Committee.

The new organization has three aims:

1. To ensure that Roof is retained as director so he can train a competent successor and to this end funds are being raised for his legal counsel at the hearings.

2. To work for the expansion of the present botanic garden.

3. To remove the botanic garden from the control of the park district administration and place responsibility for its operation in other hands yet to be chosen.

Save the Garden will sponsor a program of color slides taken at Tilden garden and narrated by Roof at 8 p.m. today in Room 159 of Mulford Hall on the U.C. campus.

The admission-free show is one step in the committee's campaign to publicize its goals.

### KEY ARGUMENT

The group maintains that cultivation of a botanic garden is a highly specialized field and cannot be properly administered merely as a recreational or normal park venture.

The order firing Roof, issued by Richard Mauler, acting manager of Tilden Park, charged him with insubordination and



consistently disregarding instructions given him by his supervisors.

The specific instance that brought about his ouster was failure to complete an inventory of all 900 plants in the garden, including their location, condition, botanical description and age along with a map and photographs.

He was given two months in which to complete the project. In a memo, Roof said he would need at least three months and he did not meet the deadline.

#### WRITES BOARD

Dr. Herbert G. Baker, director of the University of California Botanical Garden and vice president of the International Organization of Botanical Gardens, wrote to the board:

"In my opinion it would not be possible to run the Tilden Park Botanic Garden without a man of James Roof's experience and capacities at the helm . . .

"I can think of no one who is available to take his place. Because it is impossible to run a garden by remote control . . . I believe Mr. Roof's departure would ring the death knell of this fine garden."

Dr. Baker also told the board at a meeting March 2 that he did not think the inventory Roof was ordered to make could be completed in two months.

#### MANY DENIALS

Mott has denied a number of times that the district intends to abandon the Tilden Park botanic garden and at one point stated: "We intend to expand it and enhance it."

On the other hand, in a letter to Dr. Baker dated March 17, 1964, Mott wrote:

"We have no intention of destroying the present Botanic Garden but will continue to use it as a place to observe those unique specimens that cannot be moved.

"Obviously, however, we will

not be maintaining two botanic gardens. Our financial resources will not permit this and it seems to me that if a new garden is developed it will have all of the interest of the present garden plus the opportunity for a greater collection of material."

Some aides in the district privately doubt that the board will adopt the Grass Valley plan.

Its scope and cost may make it infeasible, they said.

About the only person who is not saying anything one way or the other is Roof, who is following the advice of his attorney to keep silent on the issue until his hearing.

## Machinists Take Strike Vote Today

Eight International Association of Machinists lodges in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco and San Mateo counties called stop work meetings this afternoon to take a strike vote.

Their master contract with the California Metal Trades Association ran out last midnight.

Negotiations between union and employer bargainers continued at the Hyatt House in Burlingame.

The lodges represent between 6,000 and 7,000 workers in Bay Area machine shops, which belong to CMTA, and 3,000 more employees of firms not affiliated with the Association.

Members of the lodges will be asked to authorize their negotiators to call a strike, if necessary.

Wages, fringe benefits and working conditions are at issue in the contract talks.

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# Berkeley Daily Gazette

An Outstanding Newspaper for an Outstanding Community

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Second  
Front

## Preservation of Botanic Garden Promised by Tilden Park Board

### Victory For Local Critics

A re-affirmation of the policy to continue and preserve the existing Botanic Garden in Tilden Regional Park was passed unanimously by the Board of Directors of the East Bay Regional Park District at their regular meeting yesterday.

The resolution was in response to criticism from the "Save the Garden" Committee, a group of botanic experts and plant growers, who contend that the Regional Parks District intends to pre-serve the Botanic Garden but not as a refuge for California native plants, its present purpose.

They maintain these plants are irreplaceable and represent a \$1 million investment.

The Resolution also re-stated the purpose of the public meeting to be held on May 11 at the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park as receiving information and data from all parties concerned relative to improving the present Botanic Garden and expanding the District's responsibility toward collecting and preserving the native plants of California.

Acting Board President Clyde R. Woolridge said the resolution was introduced to clarify the confusion and misunderstanding which have arisen recently in regard to the continuation of the Botanic Garden.

Dr. Leo Brewer of the University of California, chairman of "Save the Garden Committee" said he was gratified at the positive statement by the board and further urged adequate budget be provided for the operation of the Botanic Garden.

Members of the "Save the Garden" committee have previously contended that the Board of the District and General Manager William Penn Mott Jr., intended to destroy the Garden and that the firing of James Roof, director of the Botanic Garden, was the first step in this direction.

Roof, who was terminated on March 2 by acting Tilden Park Manager, Richard Mauler, will have his appeal heard Thursday afternoon, April 8, at a review with General Manager Mott, as specified in the District's administrative manual. If his dismissal should be upheld by Mott, he has recourse to a further review by the Board of Directors. Meanwhile, while the case is pending, Roof remains on full salary as director of the Botanic Garden.





*Independent*  
*5/19/64*

## TILDEN PARK GARDENER REINSTATED

Charges which led to the termination of James Roof, director of the Botanic Garden in Tilden Regional Park, were dismissed last night by William Penn Mott, Jr., general manager of the East Bay Regional Park District, following a five hour review of the case.

Mott said that another meeting would take place on April 22 to consider methods and procedures of preserving and improving the Botanic Garden under Roof's direction.

Roof was fired on March 2 by Richard Mauerl, acting park manager at Tilden Park, and appealed the dismissal.

Thus winds up a problem which has given rise to confusion and misunderstanding over the past five weeks between the Regional Park District and several groups defending the Botanic Garden and Roof.

At the Regional Park District's regular meeting of the board of directors on Tuesday, a resolution reaffirming the Board's policy to continue and preserve the Botanic Garden was passed unanimously by the directors.

Members of the "Save the Garden" committee had previously stated that the board and Mott intended to destroy the garden and that the firing of Roof was the first step in this direction.



SAVE THE GARDEN COMMITTEE --- ANNOUNCEMENT!!

The fate of the Tilden Park Botanic Garden will be debated by the East Bay Regional Park District Board at its regular public meeting, November 2. The special Board committee appointed to make recommendations on the Tilden Park Garden, consisting of Mr. Marlin Haley, Chairman, Mr. Fred Blumberg and Mr. George Roeding, will present its report to the EBRPD Board at this time.

If the EBRPD Board takes favorable action on this date, it will culminate the efforts of more than two years of work by various citizens groups concerned with the fate of the Tilden Garden. No citizens committees concerned with any aspect of the Regional Park District program have had as broad a base as the groups concerned in this. Major organizations which worked on this were The Friends of the Botanic Garden, The Citizens for Tilden Park, the Contra Costa Garden Committee and The Save the Garden Committee.

Petitions with more than 3,000 signatures, asking that the garden be preserved, improved and expanded at its present location, were presented to the Board in 1964 by the Citizens for Tilden Park. These petitions, indicating an unusually broad interest in the Garden, were not acted upon in 1964.

In April, 1965, the EBRPD Board passed a resolution stating its "...policy not to destroy, remove or diminish the size and quality of the existing California Native Plant Botanic Garden now located in Charles Lee Tilden Regional Park. . ." This resolution also stated the Board's committee would hold a hearing May 11, 1965 to "...receive information and data relative to improving the present garden. . ."

The hearing of May 11, attended by more than 100 concerned citizens, was held at the Brazilian Room in Tilden Park with Dr. Lincoln Constance as M.C. for the presentations. The reports of various members of the Save the Garden Committee and the Citizens for Tilden Park were given serious attention by the Board committee. After this hearing copies of all proposals for an expansion of the Tilden Garden were given to the committee, along with a transcript of the notes taken by a stenographer hired for the hearing.

When the 1965-66 budget of the District was presented in June, 1965, an allocation of funds almost double the former figure was proposed for the Garden. All workmen, including the Director, were to receive raises. This was approved.

During the summer Mr. Haley's committee studied the reports, plans, and suggestions which they had received. They met several times with Drs. Leo Brewer and Michael J. Copley, who explained and amplified various proposals. The final report of this committee is now ready for the November 2 meeting.

The final status of the garden is still in doubt. However, it is our sincere hope that the EBRPD Board will heed the wishes of the hundreds of citizens who have worked not only for a better status for the Garden and its Director, but also for the expansion of the garden in Tilden Park. It is our hope that these plans for the expansion of the garden in Tilden Park will be accepted by the Board at this meeting.

REMEMBER \*\* -- \*\* 11500 Skyline Boulevard, Oakland

Tuesday afternoon, 2 p.m.

November 2, 1965

SEE YOU THERE

SEE YOU THERE

SEE YOU THERE



# New Clash Over Botanic Garden at Park Board Meet

*Jayette No 3 1965*

By MARY ELLEN PERRY

Berkeley and El Cerrito citizens yesterday again clashed with the directors of the East Bay Regional Park District over future plans for the Tilden Park Botanic Garden.

At issue were two specific recommendations contained in a report presented by three directors after months of study of the botanic garden and a public hearing.

After discussion, the directors voted to study the report for two weeks before taking action.

The recommendations were that

the garden located in Tilden Park, concentrate on displaying native plants from the nine Bay Area counties and that a foreman be trained as a successor to James Roof, the man who started and developed the garden.

Professor Leo Brewer, division head at the University of California Radiation Laboratory, who has spearheaded citizens' efforts to get the garden improved and enlarged, said he thought the garden should continue gathering native specimens from all over California; should have on its staff an assistant director training to replace Roof; and should

be assured of a larger budget in the future.

Director Marlin Haley who headed the study committee which included Directors George C. Roeding, Jr., and Fred C. Blumberg, said the garden would not be limited to displaying plants from the nine Bay Area counties if private funds could beef up its budget.

## SOLICITATION DISCUSSED

Dr. Watson M. Laetsch, a UC professor and officer of the newly-formed California Native Plant Society, said his group could not solicit funds to support the garden unless "we have assurance the garden will be run well for a long time." He said a "broad base of support" would be necessary to get private contributions.

Roof said he questioned the nine-county emphasis.

"Can someone on the district staff give the people and the board of directors a professional opinion, showing any advantage to a nine-county garden over the present statewide garden?" he said.

Other speakers included Mrs. Mary C. Wohlers and Mrs. Marion Copely of Berkeley and Mrs. Horace Burr of El Cerrito, all of whom urged the garden be expanded and retained as a statewide display facility.

## 'BELITTILING'

Brewer said he considered emphasis on plants from the nine bay counties would "belittle and diminish" the garden.

Haley read the committee's report which included the following recommendations:

—That a five-year-master plan be developed for the garden by Park District staff and Roof, the garden director, subject to final approval by the Board of Directors.

—That a citizens' advisory committee be appointed by Roof to work with the park district, subject to board approval.

—That more parking, reconstructed buildings, and restrooms and improved living quarters for Roof be provided.

—That the maintenance of the garden be the "sole responsibility" of Roof.

—That expansion be considered after the present garden is brought up to standards consistent with the rest of the district's facilities but that no expansion into Wildcat Canyon be considered.

—That plants should be adequately labeled, catalogued and Roof's records over the last 25 years should be duplicated for storage.

—That private funds from persons and groups interested in the garden be used to support field trips and other related activities.

—That the garden staff consist of Roof, a foreman and two gardeners.

After members of the audience tendered their opinions, Director Paul Badger said he supported the citizens committee, the master plan, and thought a "target date" should be set to complete improvement of the present garden.



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# Berkeley Daily G.

An Outstanding Newspaper for an Outstanding Community



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BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA, FRIDAY, AUGUST 13, 1965

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## Native Plant Group Established Here

Incorporation papers were filed yesterday for what may become a major new conservation organization here with a group of sponsors including Admiral Chester W. Nimitz and Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Glenn T. Seaborg.

Called the California Native Plant Society, the new group's objective is to preserve plants native to California now under threat of extinction.

Its headquarters will be at the Jepson Herbarium at the University of California here and it will be a non-profit organization.

### COMMITTEES

A large number of committees will function to find and preserve plants native to the state, some of which grow in extremely limited areas of a few hundred square yards. There are over 1,000 separate species of plants in California native to no other part of the world.

Some have become extinct as their habitat has been paved over for housing developments of freeways.

The committees will deal with such areas as historical research, real estate, nurseries and plant research, botanical gardens, natural disasters, commercial uses of native plants, garden clubs, highways, vandalism and several others.

Committees and chapters of the statewide society will use the Berkeley headquarters as a "clearing house" for information concerning conservation of the flora, according to the society's organizers.

### SPONSORS

The steering committee con-

sists of Watson M. Laetsch, president and a University of California botany professor; Mrs. Maxine Trimbo, secretary; and Richard N. Loosley, treasurer.

Sponsors of the society include Rimo Bacigalupi of the Jepson Herbarium; Herbert G. Baker, and D. Helen-Mar Beard of the UC Botanic Gardens; and Leo Brewer, UC chemistry professor and division chairman of the UC Radiation Laboratory.

Other sponsors from Berkeley include H. M. Butterfield, Dean at UC Dr. Lincoln Constance; Mr. and Mrs. Michael J. Copley; Vernon and Betty De Mars; Mr. and Mrs. Scott Fleming; Norvel Gillespie, Dr. Joel Hildebrand; Junea Kelly; S. G. Morley; E. M. McMillan; Mary Rhyne; Helen K. Sharsmith; and Mr. and Mrs. Read D. Tuddenham.

Sponsors from El Cerrito include Mr. and Mrs. Don P. Facioner and Susan Fruge.

From other locations are Mr. and Mrs. John L. Child, Ralph Jones, and Elwin Stone, Oakland; Elizabeth McClintock and George F. Sherman, San Francisco; and Mr. and Mrs. John Coulter, San Carlos; Walter E. Lammerts, Livermore; George J. Marquette, St. Helena; Dennison Morey, Santa Rosa; Clyde Robin, Castro Valley; Lester Rowntree, Carmel; John Shepherd Naples, Italy; Walter L. Taylor, Walnut Creek; and also Maunsell Van Rensselaer, Saratoga.

A board of directors will be announced soon, the group said, and membership to the community at large will also be opened.

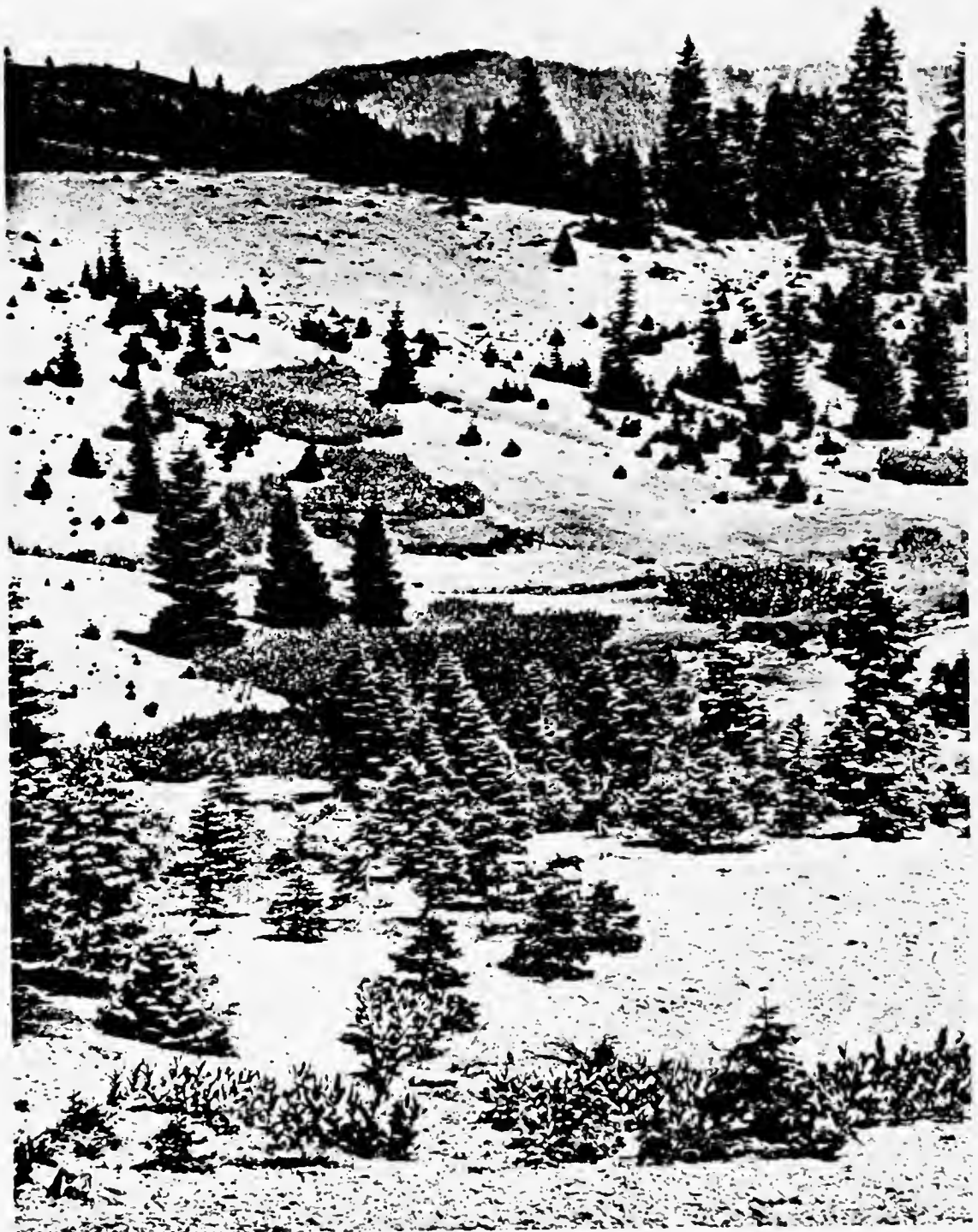




# THE FOUR SEASONS

Volume 1, Number 3

November, 1965





## ON THE PEAK NAMED ANTHONY

By James B. Roof

Director, Regional Parks Botanic Garden

*On Our Cover:* Shasta firs and California corn lilies in the big "meadow" at Anthony Peak, Tehama County. In the background: the South Yolla Bolly, 8092 feet in elevation.

by Dennis Galloway  
July 4, 1965

### The Covelo-Paskenta Road

The town of Willits, in Mendocino County, lies one hundred and twenty miles to the north of San Francisco. Not far to the north of Willits there is a road that offers rambling access to some of the jumbled mountains of California's inner north Coast Range. The road leaves the Redwood Highway, U. S. No. 101, at the hamlet of Longvale, and proceeds northeastward. After passing through the town of Covelo, in Round Valley, it climbs several ridges in order to reach and cross the spine of the range, at close to 6400 feet of elevation, near Anthony Peak.

From there it drops down to Corning, on the Valley Highway, U. S. No. 99, in the great Sacramento Valley. The road is measured at one hundred and sixteen miles between Longvale and Corning. It is sixty-five miles between gas stations, from Covelo, in Mendocino County, to Paskenta, in Tehama County. It seems longer in summer because it is not a paved road of the moist coastal redwood belt, but one of the old-fashioned hot and dusty tracks of our fogless inland mountains.

### The Lower Forests

East of Covelo the road winds steadily upward. It rises from 1300 feet of elevation, in the Round Valley Indian Reservation, to Mendocino Pass, at 5000 feet of elevation. On its course it passes through the kind of woodland-chaparral that in California is common to such summer-dry terrain. The major tree species of this thin forest, from 1500 up to 2500 feet of elevation are valley oak (*Quercus lobata*), buckeye (*Aesculus californica*), oregon ash (*Fraxinus oregona*), Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga Menziesii*), madrone (*Arbutus Menziesii*), broadleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) and blue oak (*Quercus Douglasii*).

From 2500 to 5000 feet of elevation the tree species are canyon live oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*), blue elder (*Sambucus caerulea*),

black oak (*Quercus Kelloggii*), ponderosa pine (*Pinus ponderosa*), and a reappearance of Douglas fir. Above Mendocino Pass, from 5000 to 6000 feet of elevation, the road moves through Douglas fir and ponderosa pine, incense cedar (*Libocedrus decurrens*), Garry oak (*Quercus Garryana*) and white fir (*Abies concolor*). In many places throughout these middle elevation forests a showy-flowered mock-orange, *Philadelphus Lewisii* subspecies *californica*, occurs on slopes, banks, and in many ravines, from 1500 to about 5000 feet of elevation. The white flowers of this shrub are slightly larger than an inch in diameter, and they appear in late June and then through most of July. It is easy to grow this mock-orange from its tiny seeds, which are ripe in August-September, and are held on the loosely-branching shrubs in a profusion of small capsules.

For several miles north of Mendocino Pass the road climbs the Etsel Ridge approach to Anthony Peak, through what can be termed a chaparral of Garry Oak; the trees there are somehow reduced to widely spreading mats that are often less than a foot in height. These mats, some of them displaying twisted "bonsai" trunks and branches, are horticulturally extremely desirable. Unfortunately, they seldom bear acorns. We have about twenty-five seedlings of these trees from the 1964 crop (collected by the Walter Knights), and look forward to using them creatively in the botanic garden.

### The Peak

At the north end of Etsel Ridge the road debouches onto the southeastern flanks of Anthony Peak. There the ridge's reddish, heat-holding soil gives way to the cool gray sandstone of the peak. Anthony is only one in a chain of medium-sized mountains that mark the dry ranges north of Clear Lake. A sampling of these peaks, from south to north (with their elevations in feet in parenthesis) would include Snow Mountain



(7056), St. John (6743), Sheetiron (6503), Hull (6873), Sanhedrin (6183), Black Butte (7448), Anthony (6963) and Hammerhorn (7593). Near Hammerhorn the peaks of this range culminate in the central mass of the Middle Eel-Yolla-Bolly Wilderness Area—which is dominated by the South Yolla Bolly (8092) and the North Yolla Bolly (7863).

Though its summit is close to seven thousand feet above sea level, Anthony is obviously not the greatest of the peaks of its chain. It is, however, high enough to be floristically different from the comparatively dry country that surrounds it. Whether it is reached from the east or the west it comes to the summer traveller as a cool and delightful surprise. Its accessibility by car makes it a superb showplace and learning-ground for those who may wish to explore the other peaks of the area—or the Yolla Bolly Wilderness itself.

Around and above its six thousand foot contours the first notable feature of Anthony Peak is its clear freedom from the usual North Coast Range underbrush and chaparral. Like many infinitely greater California *eminenti* it has a bald head and a scraggly fringe around its neck. Because of its modest elevation the barrenness of summit may not represent a true timberline, yet it is an effective timberline. The bare slopes and summit are caused by a combination of factors, not the least of them being the presence of a thin, gravelly or rocky soil on a high peak that is frequently swept by strong sea-winds. Such a timberline is unusual at around seven thousand feet of elevation. In the Sierra, 200 miles directly east of Anthony Peak, a true timberline would occur at or around nine thousand feet of elevation.

The appearance of a timberline ecology so far south in the Coast Range invites analysis. An examination of its flora shows that Anthony's summit is almost a "Sierran island" that "floats" on an extensive ocean of timber and brush. Six shrubby plant species occupying prominent places in its opens find their main centers of distribution in the Sierra Nevada.\* On the harder soils of the summit's gentler northeast reaches are large colonies of pinemat manzanita, *Arctostaphylos nevadensis*. In the looser soils are thickets of bitter cherry, *Prunus emarginata*,

\* On nearby mountains and ridges, not far from Anthony Peak, are two other notable "Sierran" plant species: Mountain Alder (*Alnus tenuifolia*), near Alder Springs; and Mountain Mahogany (*Cercocarpus ledifolius*) (FOUR SEASONS: 1:2) on St. John Mountain.

blooming white after July first of each year. A blue-gray Sierran tone is added to the landscape by broadly sculptured, low and compact clumps of mountain whitethorn, *Ceanothus cordulatus*. An even more familiar Sierran habitant is present in dozens of spongy areas—massed ranks of California corn lily, *Veratrum californicum*.

Here and there in wet places are duplicates of the Sierra's dusky willows, *Salix melanopsis*. They can be seen springing from the ice water in the wet runoff rill that flows across the road from Anthony's miraculously preserved wooden spring-tank. The dusky willows characteristically bear some persistent catkins all summer long. Another Sierran willow species occupies drier places a little lower down on the peak. It is Nuttall willow, *Salix Scouleriana*, which is to be found around the peak's Wells Cabin Campground, around Government Flat, or along Log Springs Ridge, which can be traversed by car for eight or so miles east of Anthony Peak.

Scattered around the highest portions of the peak are two species of sub-shrubs that are found in both the Sierra and the Coast Range—pale juneberry, *Amelanchier pallida*, and dwarf ocean spray, *Holodiscus discolor* variety *dumosus*. The minor thickets of such shrubby species in no way destroy the pleasant spaciousness of the Anthony highland. It is notable that a combination of natural factors have precluded the invasion of California's ubiquitous Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, white fir, poison oak or dry grassland into this beautiful upland. One of the most attractive features of the summit area is the ease with which one walks through its open reaches—through hospitable places that are exceptionally free of poisonous plants, burning sun, venomous reptiles and stinging insects.

### The Fir Forest

Around the open "Sierran" ground are stands of a most attractive conifer. The mountain supports a loosely knit but extensive forest of Shasta red fir, *Abies shastensis* Lemmon (*Abies magnifica* variety *shastensis* to many authors). These narrowly spired, symmetrical evergreens stand alone as representatives of a northern forest "invasion" into the Anthony Peak flora. The species is found in the southern Sierra Nevada, but these at Anthony must surely have wandered into this outpost from our northern mountains of Trinity and Siskiyou counties. Even so, the bright yellow staghorn (wolf) lichen (*Letharia vulpina*) covers the darkly broken



or reddish bark of the older trees, just as it does on red fir over in the big Sierra.

It is the clean growth of the young Shasta firs that commands every visitor's admiring attention. At from twelve to twenty years of age, with their evenly spaced whorls of branches, the firm young firs make splendid Christmas trees when cut. They grow very closely to the ideal form of the perfect "silvertip," *Abies magnifica*, of the Sierra. In June, as the last of the winter's snows melt away from the mountain's roads, the upright cones of the Shasta firs, though only one-quarter-sized miniatures of what they will become, are already formed. They stand near the tops of the oldest spired trees, and even on the topmost branchlets of many young trees. Some of the cones are almost within reach on young trees that are not more than ten or twelve feet high.

By mid-July the cones are sturdily half-sized, at from three to four inches long. They are shiny yellow-green, wet with fresh resin, and their exserted yellow bracts—their key character—are plainly to be seen on those smaller trees where the cones are only a few feet overhead. The exserted cone-bracts are so densely shingled over the conelets that the green cone scales themselves are fully hidden.

The cones mature around September first, and should be harvested before September tenth, before they disintegrate on the trees. The seeds from these trees are exceptionally fertile, but they are best sown as soon as they are brought in from the field. The fertility of seeds of the California species of *Abies* is pretty transient in any kind of storage.

Shasta fir is found farther south than Anthony's stands in a few places in the Coast Range. It occurs ten miles south of there on Black Butte and at Plaskett Meadows, and even farther to the south on St. John and Snow mountains, in southwestern Glenn and Lake counties. But it is nowhere more impressive or handsome, or more convenient to the motorist or walker as it is on the slopes at Anthony.

The Shasta fir forests on the upper slopes of Anthony Peak are made up of individual trees of all ages, from ancient and scraggly trees to seedlings of the year. The opens are often covered with hosts of small trees. Left to themselves they would eventually occupy almost all of the more barren ground and alter, for the worst, the wonderful nature of the peak. Wisely, however, the Forest Service authorizes the cutting of several hundred small trees each winter. The Christmas tree cutting, plus intensive deer grazing,

Anthony Peak's flowering earth is being seriously considered as a winter sports area. For the past two winters a group of ski buffs have greedily eyed the meadows and slopes and the long west shoulder of the mountain as a potentially new and exclusive stamping yard. A third survey is in prospect for this coming winter.

Any "development" at all in lodges, parking areas, ski-tows, power lines and the usual neon dazzle, would ruin this unique garden spot. The survey group may discover that the snow on Anthony doesn't last long enough, in deep enough form, to hide the skier's inevitable sardine cans that show up so brilliantly on the "slopes" each summer.

That's what our surveys show.

the poor soil, the winter snows and intensive wind conditions, helps to preserve the marvelous spaciousness of the area.

It is the firs that give the summit country its character. They are the dominant conifer and the one that offers us a peak not totally Sierran, but rather Sierran-Cascade in nature. If its slopes held three additional Sierran species of plants—Jeffrey pine, quaking aspen and huckleberry oak, it would be too Sierran to be true. The scene up there is truly set for them, and all three of those species would doubtless thrive on Anthony. And aspens, however charming, would undoubtedly ruin the opens, robbing them of their essential nature. Peculiarly enough, it is the lack of aspens, leaving room for corn lily and wildflowers, that makes the small Anthony Peak country what it is.

### The Meadows at Anthony

The word "meadow" hardly describes them. Over half of the meadow surfaces are made up of almost bare ground. It would be bare ground except that it is thinly inhabited by pussy paws, *Calyptridium umbellatum*, and a tiny *Collinsia Rattannii* which is called, and really has, "blue lips." The diminutive pussy paws spread their small rosettes and paws in every likely place on the most barren of ground, from the meadows to the summit of the mountain. In July, when spring comes to the peak, they can be so prolific that, from a distance, the gray soil appears to be pink, so abundant are their flowers.

Shiningly set apart from the gray stretches of gravel, the meadow's wet opens are brilliant sheets of green. Until they are closely examined it might be guessed that they consist of some superlatively fresh and clean





mountain grass. However, close inspection shows these "lawns" to be spongy underfoot and made up of a moss that is a fresh yellow-green in color. Mixed in with it is much emerald clover, a species of sedge, the small, soggy-site *Mimulus moschatus* and *Mimulus primuloides* variety *pilosellus*, a *Stachys* and two *Lewisia*s, *nevadensis* and *triphylla*.

Such grasses as occur in the wet portions of the meadows are sparsely represented and are negligible items in those many species that comprise this many-splendored "turf." Moisture rules where the edges of the green patches shall be, and at the inch where the moisture ends, so does the green, and with an almost disconcerting abruptness. Outside the green margins is gray gravel, like the famous raked Japanese gravel garden, the "sea of nothingness."

In the open meadows are many water seeps. These are pressured up and outward from melting snows that pack on the slopes and the draws from December to June. The notable summer features of the seeps are colonies of California corn-lily, *Veratrum californicum*. Here and there in the opens—always on ground that is spongy, or at least wet with snowmelt—the *Veratrum*s are in smartly ordered ranks, like small green armies massed to charge across the brooks at each other. They have reserves, too, marshalled up the hidden draws: here a file, there a regiment, up that gully a battalion—all freshly yellow-tinted and glistening in the summer sun. And not one small squad of these standing infantries will venture one inch away from its wet seep.

The *Veratrum* adds the final photogenic touch to the meadow. Some of its lower leaves are ten inches long, eight inches wide, and they form green bowls that are three inches deep. These finely lined leaves are a pictorial delight, and few photographers can resist back-lit close-ups. The corn-lilies will stand in ordered ranks until the first frost of autumn fells them, all in their places, long before the snows that gave them life come to level every trace of their standing levies of summer.

Where the streamlets leave the meadows, on their way down to the hot, brushy canyons, their cold waters spill over little ledges of black and gray rock. If you're not careful around the ledges you slip on Brittle Fern, *Cystopteris fragilis*, the common and yet elusive summer water-fern with the delicately pale and translucent leaves and stalks. It is a beauty and easy to grow in a shaded rill. It is also interesting to know that it is found from Anthony to our southern desert

mountains, north to Alaska, and in Europe and Asia. Our clump is on the ledge of a cold brooklet pocket, at 6000 feet of elevation, in Tehama County.

There are plenty of other wildflowers here, and these are the pleasantest of meadows to explore. Just like some people collect coins or stamps, meadows should be collected and cherished. The "meadow" at Anthony is one of California's most unusual and irreplaceable meadows.

### The Summit

July on Anthony Peak is hardly the summer month that it is on our lowland calendars. Spring really comes to Anthony on or around July first, and even then not fully. You would, for instance, not see all of the species of *Mimulus* in bloom until mid-July. Up to the end of June there are small patches of melting snow scattered here and there, and throughout July the calendar is wrong and all the flowers up there have an authentic April air about them.

Summer finally comes to the mountain around August first, and autumn on October first, when the Garry oak leaves are golden along the lower ridges. The growing season is short and hurried, and a short postponement of your visit can easily cost you an entire season up there.

Most botanists make pilgrimage to Anthony Peak to see a hardy pentstemon that grows very close to the summit. Among other and more prosaic flowers, the gravelly "wind pavement" up there, at 6900 feet of elevation, is noted as a location where one can drive a car right alongside the rare *Pentstemon Purpusii*. The undisputed silver queen of its family, it is found only in the North Coast Range of California. It seeds profusely along the last two hundred yards of barren roadsides just before the Anthony summit. Its thick, small leaves are a fine platinum-gray in appearance. They are deeply keeled, as if better to ride out the storms that sweep their gravelly wasteland.

The flat plants seem not to be browsed by deer. They are practically invisible in the gray gravel until you walk among them. But they are numerous—three to six or eight feet or so apart—seeded out into the open from larger plants that are usually found to be windsheltering in among the summit boulders. Some of the small plants are old, with a heavy taproot and a woody root-crown, and are best left alone. And many are new two and three-year-old transplants, with fine sets of eight-inch long, multiple-tap roots.



After July first the pentstemon begins to bloom. The flowers come slowly at first, then in profusion. It is usually in full bloom by July fifteenth. The flowers are so deep a blue that some call them violet and some say purple. Contrasted against the unusual foliage, they are worth any long trip to the mountain. An old silvery rug of a plant, two feet wide, not more than three inches high at center and covered with fresh indigo flowers is not likely to be forgotten. The rock garden buff, seeing the blue and silver combination for the first time, speaks in vacancies and comports himself with feverish indecency, all the while hoping that you will move on and free him for some fast petty larcency.

High on the north slope of the peak there is *Phlox speciosa* subspecies *occidentalis*. In June its bright pink flowers are so tightly wedged together that they hide the loosely arranged, prickly phlox leaves. With it grows a small, two-toned violet, *Viola hallii*; its flowers are red-violet on top and deep yellow below. All over the peak there is the ashy-leaved *Viola purpurea* subspecies *integrifolia*. Its flowers present yellow-petalled faces and are purple beneath.

Up on the wind-pavement with *Pentstemon Purpusii* are lots of individuals of a flat, lacy-leaved plant, the gray *Lomatium ciliatum*, and a dwarf buckwheat or two. But after seeing *Pentstemon Purpusii* in full bloom at eleven-thirty of your first morning, the rest of the botany up there can wait until after lunch.

Nearer to camp, on the sparsely forested slopes below the summit, most of the showy flower species are not found on open ground. Any one of them that shows its head by day is likely to be nipped off at night by the deer. The principal plant survivors in this category exist down under the rigid branchlets of shrubs that have themselves been overcropped into defensively thorny skeletons. Within the frameworks of these defensive "baskets" some splendid flower species live on in numbers desperately reduced from their hordes of twenty years ago. The most unusual of them are the startlingly unexpected chalices of scarlet fritillary, *Fritillaria recurva*. With each year that passes these frits become scarcer. Numbers of pussy ears, *Calochortus Tolmiei*, hide under the foot-high shrubs of *Arctostaphylos nevadensis*. Here and there in the deepest thickets there is much of the darkly red-flowered mountain form of western bleeding heart, *Dicentra formosa*. In the badly overbrowsed thickets above the Wells Cabin Campground, a big

green gentian, *Frasera speciosa*, a solid and clean-leaved herb, springs boldly and coarsely from the bare red earth. Its clusters of leaves are tall, pale green and tongue-like. It used to be called *Swertia*. Nobody grows it, though the flowers are showy enough for horticultural purposes, and it would be a real oddity in a botanic garden. We must try it, and soon.

In the woodland opens the only flower that escapes the ravaging deer is a rare stickseed, *Hackelia amethystina*, an herb which bears flowers remarkably like some kind of a large and showy forget-me-not. The blue, sometimes pink, flowers are borne on stems that may be two or three feet tall. These stems rise from a cluster of basal leaves that look somewhat like Mule's ears (*Wyethia*) springing from the bare gravel or humus. The *Hackelia* is a woodland delight and hard to grow. We are presently going through our third set of high hopes for growing it.

It's not all flower-watching on the peak or in its woodlands. Those visitors who observe closely will see that bird and animal life is unobtrusively plentiful here. An occasional Sierran chickaree runs up or down a Shasta fir. Chipmunks, perhaps of the Sonoman persuasion, dart here and there along the quiet roadside. There are golden mantled ground squirrels in the lower pine forests. This is pretty far south for them in the Coast Range, but they are definitely present. A few Beechey ground squirrels inhabit some of the rockier outcrops just below Anthony's summit.

Deer are plentiful, and they are apt to come directly into your camp late at night to carry on the more violent of their domestic quarrelings. Sitting still on some quiet afternoon slope, it is not unusual to have a spotted fawn go stepping by, looking you in the eye and quite unafraid. An occasional black bear ventures into your camp late at night, on the prowl for sweets or bacon. The bear will leave upon demand and not return. The bears hereabouts are shot at in season: they have manners and want no part of you by night, and even less by day.

Except for a quorum of raucous crows, Anthony's birds are very quiet. Many kinds of small birds work closely to tree and ground, with no time to waste on intruders. The brightest of the birds, the western tanager, gives you only glimpses of his almost tropical brilliance—yellow, black, red—as he flashes by on the way to things more important than posing for you.



For a while we wondered if there were mountain quail on the peak. We saw only California quail and supposed that there was only one species native there. Then, on the way down, along the dusty road, were the long, slender bodies of mountain quail; they were racing along the roadsides, frantic to turn off and away from the rattling approach of the car. There were tall, slightly curved spikes on their heads instead of the nodding plumes of the California males, and they were not plump, but racy and sleek, like waxwings.

### The Camp

Around the camp the deep duff of the peak's encircling forest maintains its own resident shrubs. If you should come upon a bitter gooseberry, *Ribes amarum*, when it's in full bloom, you'll want to own and grow one. The shrub matures at a neat height of around three feet, and its June (or early July) flowers are strung along the undersides of its arching, prickly branches. The flower tubes are rose-white and the sepals of the calyx are a living velvet of pure crimson. It is by far the handsomest of Anthony's woodland shrubs, and easy to grow in lowland gardens.

Some of the shrubs up there have flowers almost twice as large as usual for *Ribes amarum*, and these are the white-velvet crimson beauties to select and grow. The seeds in the bristly berries are fully ripe in September. Under and around the *Ribes* the flower scapes of wintergreen, *Pyrola picta*, along with leathery leaves that are shining green and mottled with white, are beginning to poke upward through the duff in the first week of July.

Down by the camp the evening fragrances are the better half of a good dinner. All through the day the sun warms the leaves of bitter cherry and distills their essences. Then in the early evening the warm air is aromatic with their prussic exhalations. But there is something even better in the air, and it can be traced to some shrubs growing in the duff on a rocky bench just above the camp. There, it seems, the clump of pale yellow-flowered *Ribes Lobbii* which we had keyed out earlier is not all *Ribes Lobbii*; there is a lovely imposter in the group. It is *Ribes viscosissimum* variety *Hallii*, a shy and little-known woodland dweller. It has been published as "sticky-flowering currant," and a weaker nondescription never reached print.

It is not a prickly "gooseberry" like *Ribes amarum*, but a "soft currant," and its leaves must surely be the most fragrant of all.

smooth currants. Cut, they wilt in your hands within minutes. Cut and put in water, they keep for four to six weeks, scenting a room with a woody spice that is somewhat remindful of that of Cleveland Sage, though not nearly so insistent.

It is here resolved that the name "sticky-flowering currant" be expunged from the *Ribes viscosissimum* variety *Hallii* records and the title "fragrant currant" entered in its place. Its yellow, bracted flowers are no bargains alongside those of *Ribes amarum*, yet we chose to try to grow it first—in cans filled with fluffy, black humus and sandy soil. It will help to complete our collection of California's smooth *Ribes*—*sanguineum*, *glutinsum*, *malvaceum*, *indecorum*, *aureum*, *nevadense*, *canthariforme*, *cereum*—and now *viscosissimum Hallii*—the shade dweller, the small perfumed sister to those rough and tough and mostly chaparral-dwelling currants.

On any slight movement of the evening air, an overriding camp fragrance—that of Shasta fir—penetrates the forest. It blends well with the currant and bitter cherry fragrances, until evening. Then fir smoke from a camp fire, with pockets of resin blisters flaming like oil, overcomes and dominates all of the other fragrances.

Plant hunters need the fire for warmth. North of that comfort, the evening view is about right—ridge after blue ridge of just the right sized mountains, with sunlight fading on them. The spring gurgles up a freshly iced water that forms interesting chemical bonds with ten-year-old bourbon. It is a healing place, the camp and its meadow, through the otherwise glorious fourth of July; there are enough plants to visit and birds and animals to see, and for those who live right, there will be unbelievably solid fluffs of white thunderheads swelling and rising to enormous heights over the Yolla Bollys.

There is nothing but sweating discomfort under the heat blankets that cover the farther valleys. In mid-June the white spikes of buckeye flowers had been exceptionally showy in the thin woodlands of those foothills. But two weeks of true lowland summer had scorched the flowers off, and on the big holiday the narrow river valleys lie baked and waiting for a touch of flame. It is a sticky drive home through those closed canyons. It seems silly to leave the cool peak for the summer follies of job and city, or even for the blaze and dust that will scatter the car on the down road, less than two miles to its south.



## DINING OUT ON CALIFORNIA CORN LILY

LAURENCE M. STICKNEY

My first meeting with the Corn Lily, *Veratrum californicum*, occurred along the steep, open meadow trail between Woods Creek crossing and Round Lake in Kings Canyon National Park. This was along the John Muir Trail, a short distance above Shorty's diminutive old cabin. It was the most nearly perfect and the largest specimen I have ever seen with great, broad, green leaves climbing up the thick, green stalk toward a creamy, white spray of blossoms that stood seven or eight feet above the ground.

From early summer, until frost blackens them or drought lays them low, these plants flourish on very moist, sunny, warm slopes—usually from 7,000 feet on up into the wet meadows above timberline. So, by climbing higher as the season progresses, one will usually find some through the whole summer long. That first plant made such an impression on me that I made it a point to learn more about it. Since I discovered, among other things, that it had been used by the local Indians for food, I have for some time been using it, when and where I can locate it, for eating purposes.

Deer have a hankering for it and will remove the asparagus-like spear that forms and swells greatly before the top explodes

into a corn-tassel-like blossom. This browse usually leaves one or two small buds which will develop on their own into small flowers to assure some seed production. Therefore, when I break off that same swelling top, I leave one or two buds, and for the same reason.

These buds may be eaten raw, but avoid the green stem, which is unpleasantly bitter. Gnaw around the stem as though you were eating corn on the cob. This way they are best when quite immature, closely packed and hard to the touch.

The whole tip (2-3 inches long) may be cooked in salted water. Boil a number of them for ten minutes, then drain and re-boil them at least twice. This removes a bitterness that seems to come from the stalk, not the buds. When the water is fairly clear, or at least only very slightly green, drain them again and then add pepper and butter for a fresh mountain green vegetable that cannot be matched in the palaces of princes.

For even more exotic use, try breaking off the individual buds from the stalk before cooking in the above way, and adding them to lightly fried *Boletus* or other edible mushrooms and scrambled eggs for a delicious light lunch.

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## A REVIVAL OF LUPINUS MILO-BAKERI

WALTER KNIGHT

Regional Parks Botanic Garden

Fifteen years preceding his demise, Charles Piper Smith described *Lupinus Milo-Bakeri*. The description was made in 1940, the same year that Milo S. Baker collected the material for the type specimen.

In 1959, *A California Flora*, Munz and Keck, placed *L. Milo-Bakeri* in synonymy under *L. luteolus* Kellogg. When C. P. Smith described the species, in his collector's notes he wrote: "Certainly nearest to *L. luteolus*." The fact that the spikes on both entities are narrow, cylindrical and verticillate, 4 to 6 inches long, with whorls close together, and that the flowers faded when dried, might bring one to believe that the two species are synonymous. Also the tap root on both is mostly straight, blunt and has no feeder roots in evidence when pulled from the soil.

The habits of both lupines are also similar. The first branches from their simple stalks generally begin at from 4 to 6 inches (or sometimes 8 inches) above the ground line. My wife, Irja, and I have made five field observations of both lupine species. Our last two observations were made on June 27 and on August 2, 1965. Following these studies, we concluded that *L. Milo-Bakeri* was separate from *L. luteolus* on the following distinctive characters:

(1) Flowering periods are at different times. On the June date, *L. Milo-Bakeri*, 3.2 miles from Covelo, en route to Mendocino Pass, had only a few nascent inflorescences, at maximum 1¾ inches long. At a station 1.6 miles farther up the road, a good patch of *L. luteolus* was mostly in fruit with only





a few flowers remaining and some seed ripe.

(2) Mature *L. luteolus* was, at maximum, 29 inches tall, while *L. Milo-Bakeri* was up to 65 inches tall.

(3) Leaflets on *L. luteolus* are mostly obovate to suboblanceolate and keeled to about 90 degrees. On *L. Milo-Bakeri*, the leaflets are mostly oblanceolate and keeled to approximately 45 degrees.

(4) Flower color on *L. luteolus* is practically all yellow. On *L. Milo-Bakeri*, flowers are almost all pale blue at anthesis, and become pale yellow in age.

(5) Stems on *L. luteolus* are generally fistulose during the life of the plant. *L. Milo-Bakeri* has a pith until seed stage at which time it becomes subfistulose.

Specimens filed at CAS—Knight 1121, 1122, 1123 and 1135.

It is interesting to note that *L. Milo-Bakeri* is found, so far, only in Round Valley, Mendocino County, California at an elevation of about 1350 feet. It is quite plentiful in roadside ditches on both sides of the town of Covelo and has a probable distribution of 4.1 linear miles across Round Valley.

Hybridization with *L. luteolus* would seem impossible as flowering periods during most seasons do not overlap.

**CONCLUSION:** *L. Milo-Bakeri* has sufficient characters to establish it as a valid species.

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Above photo shows Irja Knight, height 5 ft. 6 in., standing adjacent to *Lupinus luteolus*. The plant is mostly in fruit on June 27, 1965.



The above picture shows *Lupinus Milo-Bakeri* with an occasional nascent inflorescence on June 27, 1965.

## A TIMELY NOTE ON THE CALIFORNIA OAK MOTH

Practically every species of oak and tan-oak in and around the Regional Parks Botanic Garden was stripped of its leaves this past summer. The bare trees of nineteen species of oaks elicited many questions, much comment and numerous requests that the trees be sprayed. The oak defoliation was not confined to the Regional Parks Garden; it was pretty general over large areas of Northern California.

When many of the oak trees at the University of California Botanical Garden in Berkeley were losing their leaves, public queries steadily mounted. Finally in early September of 1965, Dr. Herbert G. Baker, Professor of Botany and Director of that Garden, posted the following notice at the Garden's main gate:

"Visitors to The Garden may notice that many of the Live Oak trees (*Quercus agri-*



*folia*) have been stripped of their leaves. These have been eaten by small caterpillars of the California Oak Moth (*Phryganidia californica*) which then descend to the ground on long silken threads. In the soil they will pupate and, later, the small brownish-white moths will emerge.

"Infestations on the scale presently visible in Strawberry Canyon are unusual, occurring in the Garden about once every seven years. The caterpillars can be killed by a variety of sprays but, we are using sprays of water only on those portions of trees directly overhanging well-used paths. The following are our reasons:

1. We attempt to keep spraying of trees to a minimum so as to fit in with a general embargo on spraying in the wild areas of Strawberry Canyon. Spraying destroys (or, in some cases, renders poisonous) the insect food of birds and other animals which we wish to preserve.
2. The oak moth and the oak trees have been engaged in this kind of battle for countless centuries and we know of no definite record of an oak tree ever being killed by the caterpillars. What usually

happens (and explains the 7-year cycle) is that a virus disease, always present in populations of this moth but usually affecting only a few individuals, grows in size through the years. Finally, when numbers reach their peak (as they have done this year) contacts between the caterpillars in the population become so frequent that the disease sweeps through the population as an epidemic. As a result, the numbers of emergent moths are drastically reduced and take several years to build up again.

"Thus, this outbreak of oak moth caterpillars will control itself—and we do not intend to impede such natural control by excessive spraying.

"The oaks will leaf out again."

H. G. BAKER  
Director  
University of California  
Botanical Garden

• *As we prepare to close out this issue in mid-October, the small, brown moths are fluttering around the bare oak trees and some of the oak species are leafing out again.*

—Editor

## HONORARY PRESIDENT OF CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY—LESTER ROWNTREE



Photo by Leo Brewer  
August 17, 1965

On her Carmel Highlands hillside she grows native plants, and one of them is a live, authentic original of the almost extinct Franciscan manzanita, *Arctostaphylos franciscana*. She acquired the shrub twenty-five years ago, in the dead of night, at San Francisco's historic and long-vanished Laurel Hill Cemetery.

"You stole a plant from a cemetery?"

"It was the only place it grew. They were going to bulldoze it out of existence. I couldn't let that happen."

"You said you dug it yourself."

"Yes. I crept in there after dark, and garnered it ghoulishly—in a gunnysack."

Put all five feet of her on a foot-high soap box and she can stare you sternly down. She can spot a humbug a mile down the coast road below her aerie. All such she can most briskly brush. No nonsense.

But mention California's native plants and watch her melt and sparkle. Royalty is gracious, and this is the undisputed, reigning royalty of our native plant world. Her books



—"HARDY CALIFORNIANS"—you can only try to buy it — and "FLOWERING SHRUBS OF CALIFORNIA" were published when the culture of our natives was in its dark ages. They are still the signposts where our inspirational (*not* scientific) knowledge of California's flowered earth begins. She has never ceased to preach the beauty and fragile vulnerability of our floral treasures before the senseless, onrushing power of progress, and our terrible need to save them—and ourselves—while and if we can.

If you want to meet eighty-seven years of accumulated wit and mischief, lively impatience and devastating charm—meet Lester Rowntree. By acclamation, the Honorary President of the California Native Plant Society. There is no one living who can so richly ornament that position. And the Society well knows that, in recognizing and honoring Lester Rowntree's lifetime of devotion to California's beauty, it has also most graciously honored itself.

### LARGE NATIVE PLANT MERGER



Mrs. Horace Burr, left, and Mrs. Maxine Trumbo, right, Secretary of the California Native Plant Society, inspect a section of the largest single shipment of native plants ever to be received at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden. September 26, 1965.

On September 26, 1965, a significant truckload of native plants was delivered to the Regional Parks Botanic Garden. It was the sixth and final such shipment to reach the garden since last August thirteenth. The occasion marked the completion of the merging of three large and varied native plant collections, one public and two private.

The public collection is, of course, the superb Regional Parks Botanic Garden representation of natives. Added to it on the late September date was, first, the Walter Knight collection, brought down from its assembly point in Petaluma, representing three years of field collecting and over two thousand dollars worth of material. Secondly, the private native plant collection of James Roof, Director of the Garden, was donated by him to the Garden. Put together over a

period of several years, it was conservatively valued at over four thousand dollars.

Many of the new plant species brought into the garden have never been seen before in northern California. A partial list of some of the rarer items would include the following:

Dwarf Squaw Bush, *Rhus trilobata* var. *anisophylla*, from Joshua Tree National Monument, Riverside County.

Shaw's Agave, *Agave Shawii*, from the coastal desert of Baja California.

Desert Agave, *Agave desertii*, from the Santa Rosa Mountains, Riverside County.

Lemmon Sword Fern, *Polystichum Lemmonii*, from Trinity Summit, in Shasta County.

Border Barberry, *Berberis Higginsae*, from near the town of Boulevard, close to our



international boundary with Mexico, in eastern San Diego County.  
 Crucifixion Thorn, *Holacantha Emoryi*, from between Amboy and Daggett, on the Mohave Desert of San Bernardino County.  
 Hackberry: Palo Blanco, *Celtis Douglasii*, from Caliente Canyon, Kern County.  
 Southern Mountain Misery, *Chamaebatia australis*, from Tecate Mountain, very close to the international boundary with Mexico, in San Diego County.

Desert Mountain White Firs, *Abies concolor*, from Mount Pinos, on its Kern County side.

Mountain Mahogany, *Cercocarpus ledifolius*, a scarce item brought in from St. John Mountain, in southwestern Glenn County. These accessions will soon (November 15th) be on public view at the Botanic Garden. They will fit in with the present collection like shining new bits in a fine mosaic.

## CONCERNING BEARGRASS, RHUBARB, ORCHIDS AND THE LIKE

### On Beargrass

At hand is a loaded question from subscriber Milton Siebert of Sunol, California: "Would it be possible for you to furnish any cultural directions for *Xerophyllum tenax*, Beargrass. I have some plants collected in the Siskiyou Mountains and would like to grow them in the Bay Area. Would clay soil, sun or light shade, summer water be okay? Any information would be much appreciated."

- Years ago we tried growing beargrass, the perennial *Xerophyllum tenax*, from our closest source, around the Double Bow-Knot on the south side of Marin County's Mount Tamalpais. It grows there on franciscan sandstone. The plants we brought in didn't live too long in the unrelieved "adobe" (Altamont loam) of the Botanic Garden.

Our most recent acquisition of beargrass has been more successful. It was collected by Dr. Robert Hoover and brought to the Botanic Garden with the Walter Knight collection of native plants. It consists of two plants that were canned midway along the Trinité Grade, between Oakdale, Napa County, and Glen Ellen, Sonoma County. The plants are growing in cans in the andesitic kind of soil found at that original location. They have been in containers for two years and they look fine. We are going to plant them out this November—on broad, crushed-rock beds that are a foot higher than the surrounding soil. No "adobe," no "black soil" for them this time.

These two plants were held for two full summers in full sun in a sheltered back yard in Petaluma. After all, we reasoned, this "Indian Basket Grass" is a chaparral species, so why not hold it in full sun? They were watered along with the rest of the chaparral species—usually two or three times weekly in warm weather. The waterings, while fairly

frequent, were sparingly applied. The plants suffered no ill effects from the waterings.

Our plans for beargrass: If these "chaparral" specimens should fail us in any way, we plan to collect our next representatives of the species up along the Ten-Mile Road, north of Gualala. There the soil is highly acid—which may be your handiest clue to this lily's culture—the winter rains are heavy and dank, and the summer fog cools them and its condensation drips on them from pines overhead. If we can't successfully match those conditions we'll have to think of some new ways to culture beargrass. But the approach to a difficult species through collecting a form from the humid coastal belt—if such a form is available—works more often than not, mainly because overwatering is not your most critical problem.

Meanwhile, how are your Siskiyou specimens doing?

### On Indian Rhubarb

Some readers were disappointed not to find comment or data on the Galloway cover photo of our last issue, Volume 1, number 2. The photo was entitled "Indian Rhubarb in the Regional Parks Botanic Garden." It soon became apparent that we couldn't get by with so simple a title. Data were requested, and data are herewith provided.

Indian rhubarb is in the Saxifrage family. It bears the mellifluous name of *Peltiphyllum peltatum*, and it was formerly known as *Saxifraga peltata*. Ours are from the bouldery-gravelly bed of the south fork of the Yuba River, along the Donner Pass Highway, between Soda Springs and Norden, at 6000 feet of elevation in Nevada County, California.

Twenty of the tough, fleshy roots of the plants (actually, they are horizontal rhizomes), three years old, were set in crevices





around one of our garden pools on August 8, 1941. When the cover picture was taken, in 1964, the plants were 26 years strong, and vigorously ringing the pool.

Indian rhubarb doesn't spread rapidly or become weedy, but builds slowly and steadily from a solid base. Each winter the leaves die back to the roots, which crawl around, in plain view, on top of the soil or gravel in which they grow, or even part way up onto nearby rocks. Old roots are usually one inch thick, often two inches wide, and their exposed upper surfaces are as tough as saddle leather, easily able to withstand the abrasiveness of mountain torrents carrying granitic sand.

In April naked scapes rise from the roots to heights of from eight to sixteen inches. They come up through a few inches of rushing snow-melt in the Sierran springtime, and unfold rose colored flowers at their summits. Fishermen are often astonished to see a river of swiftly-flowing, clear mountain water come into bloom in such fashion. As the water drops to root level, new spring leaves soon follow the flowers.

Indian rhubarb does best when it is partially shaded from the hottest sun of summer. On older plants the leaves may achieve diameters of over sixteen inches and are extremely decorative on pool edges, stream-sides or lawn margins. They welcome and thrive on water from a pool, and siphon it greedily when it is available. But it isn't necessary to have "water at its feet"; superb garden plants can be grown with a hose or lawn sprinkler and no pool or stream in sight.

To grow and own a large Indian rhubarb plant is considered a native garden achievement, principally because it takes several years for the roots to build up enough size and strength to produce the largest and most decorative leaves. These leaves color orange and red through the autumn before dying away in each winter season. And, each spring and summer, they build their roots just a little larger, and so produce larger leaves.

We have never seen an Indian eating this rhubarb, but in times past it doubtless offered them a summer source of vitamin C. Jepson, in his *Flora of California*, volume two, page 125, tells us that:

"The stout fleshy petioles and scapes, with the epidermis peeled, were eaten by the native tribes and, when young, regarded as a delicacy. In our journeys we have tried them and found them pleasant. The great leaves were also used by the Indians as folders in which to wrap newly-caught fish."

### On An Offbeat *Mimulus*

Malcolm Nobs, who toils for the Carnegie Institution of Washington (at Stanford University), is responsible for the Timberline Experimental Station, 10,500 feet up Sawmill Creek in Mono County's high Sierra, and a similar layout down at Mather, on the Hetch-Hetchy side of the western Sierra. For quite a while now he has been carrying on extensive top secret work with the western species of *Mimulus*.

A season or so back he crossed some *Mimulus cardinalis* from Los Trancos Creek, San Mateo County (at 75 feet of elevation), with some *Mimulus Lewisii* from the base of the north plateau of the Harvey Monroe Hall Natural Area, Inyo National Forest, Mono County (at 10,500 feet of elevation). When seeds became available from the resultant hybrids, he looked for a natural site where he could sow the seeds without upsetting the distributional data on our *Mimulus*.

He found it halfway down Leevining Canyon at the point on the Tioga Pass Road where the water from Sweet Spring cascades down a roadside bank. Only the yellow-flowered *Mimulus guttatus* grows at that rill, or for miles around it. So Malcolm climbed high up the rill and then, with joyous abandon, sowed his *Mimulus* seeds all the way from the rill-top back down to Highway 120.

This summer there appeared, in the damp granitic sand of that roadside, a somewhat startling *Mimulus*. Meaning that, if you pretend to know this business, you have to think fast when you see a *Mimulus cardinalis* with not a trace of scarlet in its flowers, but instead bearing blooms of a pure and vivid, *deep rose* color. In the cross the scarlet color of the *Mimulus cardinalis* flower is completely absent and the small area of rose that distinguishes the flower-throats of *Mimulus Lewisii* is strangely present, solid and dominant. The beauty of the bloom is doubly enhanced by the fact that the flower structure is the cleanly attractive one of *Mimulus cardinalis*. The leaves, too, are clearly those of *Mimulus cardinalis* in their major details.

The federal road builders, presently hard at work destroying the flora of Leevining Canyon, reached a dozer blade to within a foot of this Nobs-rose-cardinal triumph. So we discreetly removed five of its running rootstocks and canned them at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden. Fortunately, they appear to be much more the vigorous, thick



and fleshy, highly perennial rootstocks of *Mimulus cardinalis*, and not the thin, tenuous, too-often-biennial, seldom perennial and easily slaughtered rootstocks of *Mimulus Lewisii*. It was thoughtful of Malcolm to build in the tougher character and make the plant's ease of culture a foregone conclusion.

Mounted specimens containing two of the rose-colored flowers are at the Jepson Herbarium of the University of California at Berkeley. Hopefully, live blooms will be on display, in the spring of 1966, at both the Regional Parks Botanic Garden and the University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley.

### On Orchids

In the course of a Mendocino coastal field trip, Dr. Donald V. Hemphill, Chairman of

the Department of Biology at Pacific Union College, Angwin, California, visited Van Damme State Park. Along Fern Canyon Trail Drive, some three miles up the canyon, he came across a small colony of the Twayblade Orchid, *Listera convallarioides* (Sw.) Torrey. This is native orchid species that is ordinarily found growing in shady, spongy places below 8000 feet of elevation in California's montane coniferous forests, in the Sierra Nevada and in the higher north Coast Range Mountains, from Lake County northward.

Until Dr. Hemphill's discovery the species had not been collected in the coastal redwood region. Dr. Hemphill remarked that these were the first twayblades he had ever seen from so near the sea and in the coastal redwood forest community.

## LETTERS TO THE FOUR SEASONS

"I enjoyed the first two numbers tremendously. Any information about native plants as detailed as you are providing is more valuable than that which usually comes out in the journals."

Malcolm G. Smith, Architect  
Larkspur, Calif.

"Have just read number two of *The Four Seasons* and found it interesting and the 'improvements' discouraging. The cover photo is good.

"Hope you will put your knowledge of propagation of native plants into book form soon."

Mary L. Bowerman  
Lafayette, California

"Thank you for sending the March issue of *The Four Seasons*. The minute I turned the first page it struck very close home to me. The occurrence of *Cercocarpus ledifolius* on Mt. St. John has been known to me for about fifteen years. Page 330 of my 1952 thesis has a full page photo of Mt. St. John summit with the mountain mahogany. This, however, is not its most southern station. I have collected it on Snow Mountain a few miles south of St. John. . . .

"My doctoral dissertation has not been published yet, but certainly some things I discovered are being uncovered by others more recently. On Mt. Sanhedrin near Willits, I collected a new species of *Orobanch*, recently described, but not yet published. My material was used for the type specimen. Now we have discovered an abundance of material on Mt. St. Helena. . . ."

Donald V. Hemphill, Chairman  
Department of Biology  
Pacific Union College, Angwin, Calif.

"Congratulations! The first two numbers show a zest and liveliness California botany sorely needs."

Ernest C. Twisselmann  
Cholame, California

". . . I'm glad I can still visualize the indigenous glory of last century California before it was bulldozed and concreted out of existence. More power to you."

Lester Rowntree  
Carmel, California

". . . I have read these two issues with interest and much nostalgia. I can indeed sympathize with you and other California residents in your plight regarding urban, suburban, and freeway 'blight.' It makes me weep to see what has happened to California in the last 20 years, and of course even if some might say it is just 'sour grapes,' it is not good and it makes me furious with human stupidity. . . .

". . . We are very busy here now, trying to give our future professional foresters a sound education. . . . The last big reserve of virgin stumpage of high value and heavy volume-acre conifers is here in B.C., and there is a 'pulp rush' or 'pulp explosion' on here in earnest. Silviculture is as usual in Dietrich Muelder's terms 'easier not to practice in the present generation.' . . . A crude silviculture may be all it is reasonable at present to expect now in much of this giant province. With the advent of pulp mills in the interior, and difficulties more severe than most foresters suspected in the regeneration and early development of spruce, lodgepole pine has been 'discovered' so far as B.C. is concerned! We have something like 70 billion cubic feet of this tree, according to latest inventories, not to mention even more hemlock and spruce, although most of the hemlock is of course on the coast."

Phil Haddock  
Faculty of Forestry  
The University of British Columbia  
Vancouver, Canada



"The first two numbers of *The Four Seasons* are magnificent. Best wishes to you and your associates in this very important work.

"As one of the villains of the piece and perhaps the original defamer of *Arctostaphylos Rosei*, may I join the party?"

J. E. Adams  
Department of Botany  
The University of North Carolina  
Chapel Hill, N.C.

"Thank you so much for sending us a copy of your new publication. Of course, we were duly impressed to see that we were mentioned along with our prize plants. It was also interesting to read the articles written by persons that had visited here—many familiar names. . . . We have missed your occasional visits to our barren."

Bob and Reba Sones  
Santa Rosa, California

"I'm not enough of a botanist to know whether or not all your statements about *Arctostaphylos Rosei* are sufficiently strong to hold up, but certainly you have done a most commendable job in bringing out all the various facets of the complexity of the problems involved for not only this species but for a whole large group along the coast and in manzanitas in general. Sometimes I begin to wonder if they are all not pretty well hybridized when one sees all the varietal types that show up in seedlings. . . .

"I wish all those in charge of our zoning in all the counties of California could receive copies of your able exposition of what is taking place in our beloved California. As a native son, I, too, weep when I see all the beautiful, rolling hills and valleys covered with houses and horrible buildings of all sorts. Unfortunately, the desire for tax monies, and the different philosophies of so many people do not consider our thinking as being of any value. . . ."

Percy C. Everett, Superintendent  
Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden  
Claremont, California

"My eye went to the part covering the loss of areas along the coastal regions of California. I wish that you might come over to our office and let us tell you of some of the positive things that have been happening along the coast. We know about the losses, because we are working in the field of land acquisition day in and day out, but too often the public does not know about the work that is being done to save some of the glorious areas. And I don't mean just talking about saving them—but actually doing it.

"We are not botanists, but we spend a lot of our time prowling around on our hands and knees, and from now on we will prowl with a copy of your Journal."

Doris F. Leonard  
Conservation Associates  
Mills Tower  
San Francisco, California

"We cannot stop the population avalanche which is transforming California Beautiful, but we could arouse sentiment toward saving many representative bits of California from extinction.

"Could there not be a statewide policy which would favor reserving representative areas, *even county by county*? Many of California's most spectacular spots have long since been set aside. But we could now reserve many more areas, not necessarily top-spectaculars, but distinctive and individual places *in all counties*.

"As a Southern Californian with a special Orange County bent, I feel that a crime of the century was failing to save a large park in the Laguna Beach and San Joaquin Hills area while the native flora was intact to the water's edge. Coastlines with their unique floras tend to be the first areas scraped off as man advances.

"But even now, it could be possible to preserve a bit of the 'coastal scrub' which tapestries the San Joaquin Hills near the sea. With its 'big seven,' Lemonade berry (*Rhus integrifolia*), Buckwheat (*Eriogonum fasciculatum*), Beach sunflower (*Encelia californica*), Berry-rue (*Cneoridium dumosum*), Black sage (*Salvia mellifera*), Sagebrush (*Artemisia californica*), and Toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*), and minus *Adenostoma*, this is a unique plant assemblage. And it is as beautiful as recognized by the Laguna artist whose 'Evening Splendor' showed the light of late afternoon glinting not on the sea, but the charmingly textured chaparral.

"The Irvine-owned northwest side of Laguna Canyon as it approaches the sea is still nearly intact florally and rancho-wise. A seacliff area just south of Salt Creek is still clothed in its native garb. Behind the bulldozers, along the coast, virgin chaparral still covers the hills. Can't some of this be rescued?

"Also, in Los Angeles County, near Monrovia, there is a wash area, government owned, which could be saved as a rocky waterway floral preserve of distinction.

"*Ad infinitum*, over the State. Here is to faster and more furious conservation action!

Lydia S. Bowen, Librarian  
Los Angeles State and County Arboretum  
Arcadia, California

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## Gardening

Marie Hammock



### Native wisdom

**S**ACRAMENTO — The California Native Plant Society, organized in October, 1983, celebrated its coming of age by inviting some 700 biologists, botanists and land managers to a conference on endangered flora. In effect, they gave a 21st birthday party, and everybody came.

It was a fairly high-powered event, held here Nov. 5 through 8, most of those invited held positions of authority. In terms of numbers, it was certainly the largest gathering in the country devoted to endemic plants.

The phrase "you've come a long way, baby" was never more apt. "Why, 20 years ago the oil companies wouldn't give us the time of day," said Joyce Burr, one of the founding members. "Now look at what's happening."

What's happening was amply displayed in a slide presentation

showing a pipeline installation near Santa Barbara. The right-of-way for the pipeline had been narrowed from the usual 100 feet to just 30 feet alongside an endangered native plant habitat.

"People have finally realized," Burr said, "that to save the plants, you have to preserve the habitat, and then you have not only the plants, but the insects, animals and the birds." Most important to scientists is that the genetic diversity of both plants and animals is preserved.

Keynote speaker Paul Ehrlich, the Stanford biologist and author, identified "habitat destruction" as the major problem in maintaining genetic diversity. Noting that a similar climatic area, the Mediterranean, has been reduced to a "goatscape" by over-grazing — he refers to goats as "horned locusts" — Ehrlich lamented that over-grazing is now threatening our own country. In effect, Ehrlich said, we are "destroying half of the United States to take advantage of two percent of the beef produced."

Herbicides and pesticides are obviously bad for the environment, Ehrlich noted, but he said spewing chemicals into the atmosphere is worse because plants suffer and the animals dependant on plants suffer as well.

One great plague that could be eliminated entirely, in Ehrlich's view, are the off-road vehicles beloved by sportsmen. "A carefully driven dirt bike can destroy an acre of desert flora for every 20 miles it's



**Paul Ehrlich**  
Warns that planet's biota is being destroyed

driven. A four-wheel vehicle will destroy an acre for every six miles it's driven."

"And as we destroy the biota of the planet — we all lose," Ehrlich said. It's not easy for many people to understand why our birds will decline here because of fragmentation of forests in Central America, he observed, but it's important that the ordinary citizen become involved.

What can the average person do? Ehrlich suggests everyone "put 10 percent of their time into trying to make society better." In terms of the environment, better means taking political action when necessary, such as advocating tighter environmental control through tighter legislation; opposing the building of more dams, which destroy native plant habitats; and promoting environmental education from elementary school forward.

"Our educational system is all wrong when it's possible to get through Stanford University without knowing where your food comes from," Ehrlich said.

If nothing else, Ehrlich noted,

## Legal terms used to describe flora

Today there are 175 species listed by California's Fish and Game Commission as either endangered or rare. The threatened category has been added in recent legislation.

**Threatened:** means likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future in the absence of protective actions.

**Rare:** means plants that, although not currently threatened, the species are in such small numbers or restricted habitats that they may become officially "threatened" or "endangered" if their present environment worsens.

— Marie Hammock

the general public should be aware that a third of all medicines prescribed come from plants, and the rest are synthesized on the basis of plant compounds. While in New Guinea last January, Ehrlich himself contracted malaria. And what saved his life? Quinine, the bark of a tree.

### The bonding problem

With legislation on the books to protect native flora and its genetic diversity, how do state agencies go about enforcing those laws?

In her paper delivered at the conference, Deborah Hillyard of the State Department of Parks and Recreation said a certificate of deposit or a letter of credit at least indicates a "good faith effort" on the part of a developer.

But in practice, a surety deposit is preferred over a performance bond, said Hillyard, whose paper was entitled "Is Bonding Any Guarantee in Ecological Management?" That's because the money is more readily available to use in protection or restoration of the local habitat involved. Bonding companies are generally reluctant to pay promptly.

But there are sometimes problems in determining dollar amounts. Should the money involved be just restoration costs or should it include punitive damages?

"The assignment of dollar values to limited resources is potentially dangerous," Hillyard said, "because it becomes a cost of doing business"

rather than responsible stewardship."

Beyond outright destruction, what constitutes damage? What about the value of stress on a plant population? Just how restored is the legal definition of "restored?" These are among the questions that face protective agencies involved with new developments around native plant habitats. And the guidelines are murky.

"We need iron-clad legislation," said Hillyard, "the pettier the better."

### Rare plants at home

What should you do if you discovered a rare, threatened or endangered plant in your own backyard or on country property you own?

One of the best answers is to call Lynn Lozier at the Nature Conservancy.

Lozier is in charge of the conservancy's Landowner-Contract program, under which property owners are encouraged to make a commitment to voluntarily protect their rare species. She can arrange to have plants properly identified, for legal purposes, and can give you all of the data base records on that particular plant. She will also explain the necessity for maintaining biological diversity.

All of the information necessary to maintaining the habitat will be furnished, and if you wish to sell or transfer the property at a later date, the conservancy will assist you with that, too. In return, they

ask permission to monitor the habitat once a year.

This is what Lozier calls "informal stewardship," so important if privately owned habitats are not to be inadvertently destroyed. And so far she's had very good response, she said. Most people are impressed that they have something in their garden or on their land that is alive and will grow and will live beyond their time.

If you find a habitat that you think needs protecting, give her a call at 777-0487.

### The origin of CNPS

The California Native Plant Society grew out of the group that rallied behind the late Jim Itoof in the early '80s when William Penn Mott, then director of the East Bay Regional Parks system, fired Itoof and tried to move the Tilden Park Botanical Garden to another site. The garden is devoted to California native flora, and natives don't transplant well; in fact, it usually kills them.

Itoof didn't want his precious Sierra meadow, among other things, tinkered with. Eventually, with public support, he was restored to his job and the botanical garden left in its present location.

Having thus succeeded, the group organized formally as the California Native Plant Society, and using Itoof's mailing list, began a membership drive. Today it has some 27 chapters throughout the State, including the newly organized Yerba Buena chapter in San Francisco.

Membership in the society is open to anyone interested in natural history, ecology, conservation, photography, botanical drawing, hiking or gardening. Individual membership start at \$18 a year (students \$12).

For further information, write the California Native Plant Society, 909 12th Street, Suite 116, Sacramento, Calif., 95814.

Marie Hammock is a Bay Area journalist whose principal interest is gardening.





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Mary Mead, the interviewer, holds a master's degree in Clinical Psychology from John F. Kennedy University. She has also received training in oral history at the Oregon Historical Society with James Strassmaier and at Vista College with Elaine Dorfman. Her counseling experience led to an interest in the biographical process and oral history in which she has been involved for several years. She has lived and worked in the Bay Area for nearly thirty years.





